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Thomas Bata:

# HOW I BEGAN

Translated by  
JAN BAROS

Foreword by  
JOHN F. BARTOS  
Managing Director, Bata Shoe Co., Ltd.  
Batanagar.

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2nd EDITION

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BATANAGAR

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**JAN BAROS**  
**BATANAGAR**



\* 3-4-1876:

THOMAS BATA

†12-7-1932.

*"My work has only one object : to serve life"*

"OUR life is the only thing in this world which we may not regard as our private property, having done nothing towards its formation. It has been merely lent to us on the condition that we pass it on to subsequent generations in an enriched and perfected state.

OUR contemporaries, and, to a still greater degree, those coming after us, have a right to demand that we should render an account of our life. The present book is meant to be such an intimate life account."

*Jannotta*

## FOREWORD

**A**LMOST ten years after the tragic death of Thomas Bata this book is published, for the first time in the English language: an entire collection of his reflections, manifestoes and speeches.

We feel it our duty to perpetuate the spiritual legacy of Thomas Bata as expressed in the following pages. We hope that by its publication we serve not only ourselves—Batamen—but all who, leaning under the weight of their own work and difficulties, are seeking for an example, for an ideal.

Here is introduced Thomas Bata, the man, from his early childhood in the small hut of a poor Moravian shoemaker through every stage of his life up to the moment when he, the world's greatest shoemaker, breathed his last in the wreck of a plane in the midst of his work. Here he is introduced as a man in the midst of crowds of men, of rough, resolute faces, hard hands; in the midst of shoemakers, tanners, salesmen, mechanics, overseers, carpenters, peasants and men of almost all those human occupations in which a man takes the substance into his hands, scuffles it, fights with it, until he transforms it into bread for himself and his fellowmen.

Here he is introduced as he was, a man amongst men; how tenaciously, how proudly he fought with the difficulties of work; how bitterly he attacked; how he encouraged; how he inspired power, enthusiasm, determination and faith among his followers. And here he is amongst preachers, doctors, scientists, chemists and professors, the people of letters, eagerly listening with the flame of understanding in his blue-grey eyes and grasping the best in things and persons in one single assault.

Those who wish to read this book merely to while away time, should not take it even in their hands. They will neither find in it an interesting story, nor romance, or even the complete life sketch in the usual meaning of this word. Thomas Bata was not a writer, every word, every sentence, every page, every episode of this book is the result of hard work, horny skins, sweat and countless sleepless

*nights. And every word, every sentence is but one solved problem, which is seen in reality here in India, in Batanagar and all over the world.*

*This book also does not contain the theoretical reflections of an economist, sociologist, philosopher or politician, who can easily give way to his fantasy and build up from his ideas and opinions a coherent closed world, without relation or responsibility towards the real world.*

*All these pages bear the expressions of a man, for whom word was the precursor of action. May be that it is only for this, only those understand him best who, working in their own daily deal, feel that life remains unfinished, that it can be understood only in the infinitude of germinaton, birth and endeavouring, as it was understood and lived through by Thomas Bata.*

*Ten years have passed since the death of the author of this book: much has changed during that time: people, nations, ideas, doctrines, philosophies and sciences have born and others died. But the deeds of Thomas Bata and all his words, which may be found in this book, with the passing of time are only realizations of their real value; because these words, as the whole life of Thomas Bata, were based on the foremost law of humanity and nature: on the law of work, service to others, work and service towards the continuous betterment of mankind.*

JOHN F. BARTOS,  
Managing Director,  
Bata Shoe Co., Ltd.,  
Batanagar.

EARLY BOYHOOD





**M**Y first accomplishment, as far as my memory serves me, was the recital of prayers. When still quite young, I was taught by my piously inclined mother to say the Lord's Prayer and the Ave Maria. Whenever there were visitors at our home, I had to parade my knowledge before them and the occasions were rare on which I was not rewarded with a penny for my trouble.

At the age of six I began to make shoes out of otherwise worthless odds and ends of leather on lasts of my own designing. From such clippings one could make shoes the size of a thumb, but they were shoes, all the same, and greatly sought after by admirers of youthful "enterprise."

To produce one pair of such shoes took a whole day of industrious labour. The price they fetched might have been anything from 4 to 10 kreuzers. A very fair reward it was, considering that the value of 4 kreuzers was at that time represented by a big coin the size of an English penny, all of pure, unalloyed copper, whilst a 10 kreuzer piece was a pure silver coin the size of an English six penny piece.

During Easter week, I took part with the other boys of my town, in the co-operative enterprise of "rattling in" the festival.

We elected a "boss," and anyone arriving late had a black mark put against his name.

I did not want any black marks. My brother and I got up as early as four o'clock in the morning to attend at the matutinal rattle, but more often than not we found all the boys gone by the time we arrived on the scene. That, of course, meant more fines.

Day by day I had the cashier's takings checked, added, multiplied and the total income split into equal shares for the various rattler co-operators. The boss and the cashiers, however, had a different set of figures to show each time. According to their reckoning, each boy received barely half the amount calculated by me.

The bitterness, exasperation and excitement which such black injustice evoked in my youthful breast were boundless.

I appealed to my father for help, but was told by him that such were the ways of this world; he would rather make up my loss out of his own pocket, sharing my laments about human knavishness.

By the time I was allowed to visit the weekly fairs, the scope of my enterprises had enlarged.

At first they consisted only in sundry minor services to the customers of my father, such as helping them to put on and take off shoes, and delivering their purchases. Such services carried with them a pay in the shape of "tips," rewards starting from Zero and not exceeding the sum of a penny a time.

The income I thus received I put into the Post Office Savings Bank. To deposit one's money one was required to buy saving stamps to the value of 5 kreuzers each, which were then affixed to the cards. Ten such stamps completed a card, and the total amount was then duly credited to one's saving account by the postmaster.

When I was ten years old my mother died, and with her went all the careful upbringing she and my father practised on us. Two years later our family moved from Zlin to a town in the neighbourhood.

My father was a born venturer. Anything requiring pluck drew him like a magnet, but he lacked perseverance. The moment he struck the first snag in anything, he would take a dislike to the old ideal and would flutter, with hope ever anew, towards a new one.

Although himself a smoker and in the habit of congregating with our neighbours at a nearby hostelry of an evening—the spending of an evening in a public house and smoking were at that time indissolubly connected with the idea of manliness—our father discouraged us from indulging in such weaknesses. Knowing only too well that words alone are but a feeble means of keeping human passions at bay, he very wisely guided us

on the right way by deeds, labour and enterprise. First of all he gave us an opportunity or showed us how to make money, and having done that he left us in possession of money thus earned. In so doing he fought down any greediness he may have felt himself, and taught us how to be careful with the money thus made.

Both my own life and that of my brother were closely bound up with my father's business. If it was prosperous, there was plenty to eat, but when it slackened down we had to tighten our respective belts.

When only twelve years of age, I saw pretty clearly what had to be done to prevent our going hungry. At fourteen I had all the sales side of the business in hand, which meant that I successfully kept the wolf of hunger away from our doorstep.

In Zlin I had four years of elementary schooling. At the beginning of my fifth school term my family went to live at a nearby town, where I had to join a German secondary school, there being no other. Very few of the pupils knew any German, while I myself was completely ignorant of that language. In Zlin we had Czech instruction. I was frequently absent from school, owing to the fact that my father at that time carried on also a fruiterer's business, and I was required to guard the orchards.

I had to neglect the first two months of the school term, a fact which hampered me in my subsequent schooling, through my having missed the start. My brother Antonin, however, received quite a successful training at that school. I myself learned nothing whatever in the town, and what scant knowledge I had brought with me from Zlin, I forgot almost altogether!

My father prized education but often he had to give preference to our calling before school so far as we were concerned. Our home boasted neither books nor newspapers, the only printed matter within reach being an almanac showing the dates of country fairs. Trades people considered books and newspapers as luxury for the upper class only.

At fourteen years of age I left school and was apprenticed to my father. Then I was introduced to the first real book which contained matter differing from that of our almanac.

One day the son of our assistant, Sirocka, brought into our house a book entitled "Pictorial History of the Czech Nation." It appeared to have come into his possession as a Zlin school prize. I started reading it, and found the practice rather hard at first. All I knew about the art of reading was what I had contrived to learn from reading primers in Zlin. In the Hradiste school we did all our reading in German. Apart from that, I was further handicapped by the fact that the book was written in a literary sort of language, which we, but, rarely heard in our part of the country.

The book fascinated me. Gradually I began to understand the glowing language of the book. I had never heard anyone talk like that. Here, for the first time, I met a man who wanted to tell me something and who evidently took pains that I should grasp his meaning. He seemed to consider me an equal when he attempted to explain to me the conceptions of Nationality, the State, and Religion. And what phrasing he employed in describing men of indomitable pluck !

I cried, I laughed, while I read on. During the luncheon interval I used to lie in the grass of nearby meadows, so deeply engrossed in my book that I had neither eye nor ear for my brother or our assistants as they capered around me.

I was fond of reading books, but the best schooling for life I found in my trade occupation. My father was soon able to enlarge his workshop, having found me capable of, and sufficient for the handling of the sale of his products at country fairs and in the neighbouring towns. It was at that time that our family began to get plenty of everything we needed, and it was then that we had most money.

My father used to buy his raw materials from a firm in Vienna, paying for it by bills of exchange. The profits made he used to put in a cupboard, in the shape of silver florin pieces.

As my work progressed successfully, so grew my consciousness of my own worth, until one day I became aware that I was not being properly appreciated. The assistants would not stop boxing my ears, and not even my father seemed to properly assess my value to his business. I therefore decided to go and strike out on my own.

I asked my father to pay out to me the 200 florins I was left by my mother, which money he had withdrawn from the Orphans Fund at a time when things looked very black for the lot of us. My father very wisely disregarded my request. Accordingly, I left without the money and went to Vienna, where my sister Anna was in domestic service. She added thirty florins to what "embryo capital" I myself possessed, and throwing in all the youthful eagerness of my fifteen years, struck out on my own account. I opened a workshop at the house of a relative in the Doebling suburb of Vienna.

I began with the manufacture of "Mikados," (a kind of slipper) and fared rather badly with that venture. The production of this kind of footwear was begun by my father with great hopes for the future, but without any experience whatever. Shortly before I left him for Vienna I took over both his hopes and his inexperience, and, to make matters worse still, I started the business at the wrong end. Instead of trying to sell a part of the goods I had produced and then continuing with the manufacture, I sunk all my capital in the production outright.

I was unfamiliar with the language for one thing, and for the other the requirements of the market were unknown to me. The finished goods on hand proved unsaleable as they were not up to the market requirements.

Happily at that juncture my father was frantically searching for me everywhere, as he stood in need of my help. Moreover, my cousin explained to me that I could not carry on my work at the workshop without having a license, that the police had already made several enquiries about me, and that I would have to go to Hradiste to obtain my trading certificate. I therefore went to the latter place, and remained there.

After my return to my father's business I took to the selling side once more, but selling goods at the fairs had lost its novelty as far as I was concerned. I detected far too many drawbacks in the system. I listened carefully what the market traders were telling each other about having delivered goods to Prague, and I duly bought a map, eagerly looking for where I should find Prague on it.

When my father found out from sundry remarks of mine that I was able to read the map and the time table, he allowed me to go travelling and supplied me with funds to the extent of 50 florins. Whilst travelling, I subsisted mostly on buns, and slept in railway waiting rooms. Of all the things my education lacked, my ignorance of writing was to me the biggest source of unhappiness. Of course I knew how to write, but nobody could decipher my scrawl. I was ashamed of handing over to the buyers the agreements I had made out, but even so there were many more things that made me heartily ashamed for not knowing them.

There were first of all my bad handwriting and spelling, my ill-arranged clothes, my unfamiliarity with the ways and manners of better class people, and last but not least my awareness of being a stripling of sixteen years of age. Thus it happened that shopkeepers sometimes would look askance at me, and considering it an insult to their calling that a grubby youngster like myself should mingle with the rank and file of commercial travellers, they saw to it more often than not that I should not grow too self-confident.

On the other hand, there were other people, really friends of youthful ambition, in whom my youthful ardour evoked enthusiasm. They grew elated at seeing a Moravian lad who came to offer them a new business connection. My travelling took me from home a fortnight altogether. I returned with a considerable number of orders in my pocket, and brought back with me 35 out of the 50 florins my father had given me when I left.

Our discovery of Prague and the discovery of new selling methods meant for our business as much as the discovery of America meant for Spain. It was only then that business began to move in earnest. It was only then that we could start turning out goods in limitless quantities, as we were not tied down to any restricted sales area. My father saw his dreams coming true and his former dreams used to be of the daring kind, however empty may have been his pockets whilst he dreamt them. I recollect an incident which happened whilst we were still desperately poor, and which even now, when memory brings it to my mind, once more gives me an insight into the character and plans my father had.

It was at the fair in Hradiste. My father, surrounded by his fellow-shoemakers, in the course of their chat remarked, pointing to the chimney stack of May's sugar refinery : "That's the kind of chimney my own boys will have one day."

The trade at that particular fair was very poor, and nobody had any money. All that the fellow-tradesmen were anxious to hear was that someone should propose going for a warm drink, and my father's visionary remark was a bit too much for their shivering bodies and drooping spirits. It seemed rank ridicule in view of our economic misery.

The shoemakers crowded angrily around my father, started calling him names, and jeered at him. I was afraid for him and at the same time angry at him for his heedless words. He, however, lost none of his assurance, and the crowd dispersed grumbling and grouching.

There were but few factory chimneys about at that time. The district as known to our fair-going tradesmen boasted of two chimneys, the one at Hradiste, and the other at Napajedla. The first named belonged to rich and particularly well-connected Jewish family of Mays, whilst the other was the property of Count Baltazzi. It was something unheard of that a commoner, and particularly a man of Czech origin, should dare to aspire to anything so grandiose. Hence the uproar, and hence the ill-feeling which the shoemakers bore my father for many subsequent fairs.



## INDEPENDENT

In 1894, we, that is to say my brother, sister and myself left our father's business for good. Our father paid out to us without any hesitation whatsoever, all our maternal inheritance, plus interest, the money amounting to approximately 800 florins all told. To part with it all required some pluck. In one big sweep he lost three able partners, and a considerable amount of his working capital. But then my father never lacked pride, courage and the will to put his children's interest foremost.

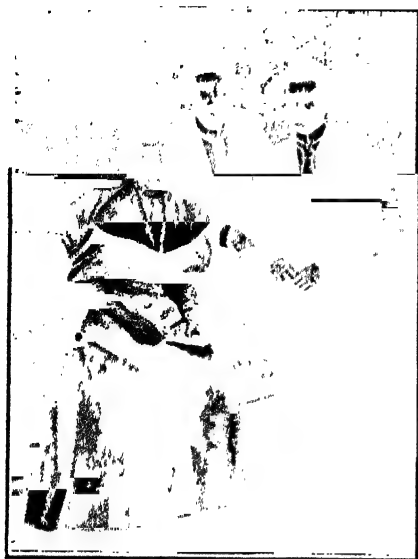
In 1894 my brother Antonin applied in his own name for a shoemaking license in Zlin. According to statutory requirements, I had to be considered only an assistant, but there was a tacit understanding between us that the results of the business would be shared by the three of us.

TO WORK FOR OUR OWN ACCOUNT WAS A GOAL WE STROVE FOR MAINLY, SO AS TO SATISFY OUR LONGING FOR A BETTER STANDARD OF LIVING.

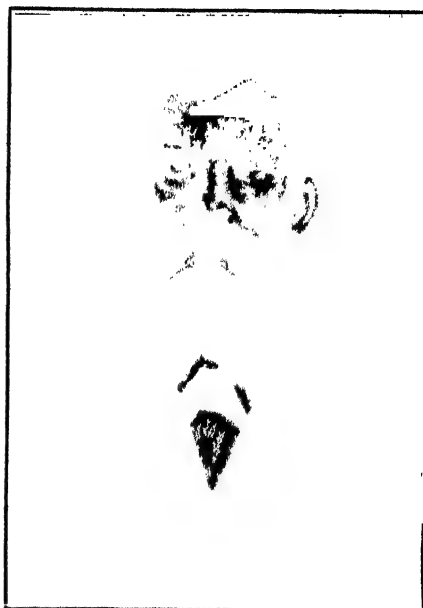
We set up our business on modern lines, introducing a strict working time from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., with one hour's break for lunch at noon, and paying out wages each week both to ourselves and our assistants. The latter method used to be regarded as impracticable where small workshops were concerned.

What they used to do was to pay their assistants' wages as and when sales were made. There were no regular, fixed working hours. Work used to commence at dawn and go on until 10 at night; on Saturday and on days preceding fairs, work went on throughout the night as well. On Mondays, however, no one turned up, making what they used to call a "blue day" of it. Work was at no time taken too seriously.

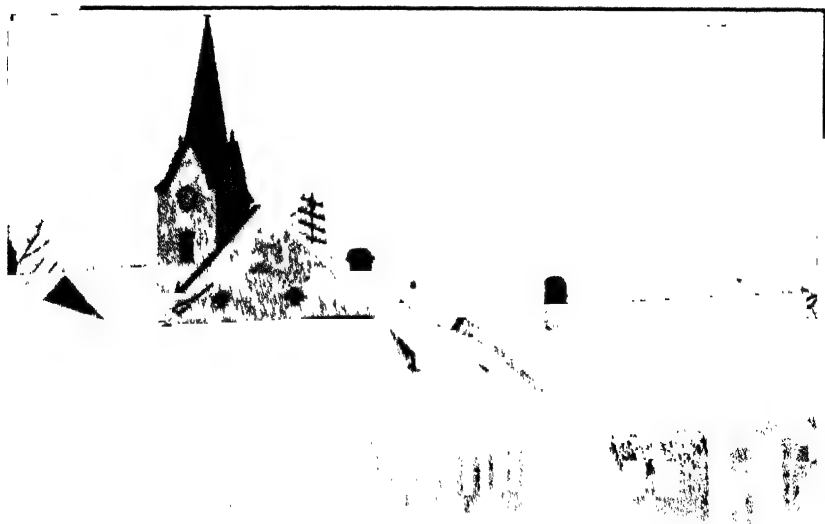
Young people from eighteen to twenty years of age need no great riches to feel rather well to do, and we, on our part, enjoyed what money we had, tremendously.



18 years old Thomas Bata (centre) with his brother Antonun and sister Anna, in the year 1894, when the firm of Bata was Founded



Antonun Bata, the father of Thomas Bata.



The house in which Thomas Bata was born.



The house, where was the first workshop of the Bata brothers



Thomas Bata amongst his first group of mechanics (fifth from the left),

We faithfully kept the promise we had given our father that we would abstain from smoking and drinking, but we employed our newly won freedom in wasting our time. We made frequent contacts with people in higher walks of life, and were deeply ashamed of being only lowly shoemakers by trade ; in fact the very thought of making shoes was enough to produce in us an inferiority complex.

The equipment of our workshop and raw material were bought by us on credit against a six months' bill, which we had to have prolonged upon its falling due.

A year after the foundation stone had been laid for our life on a "higher plain," however, our creditors became tired of having repeatedly to prolong our bills, and incidentally, "our lording it in business." They most explicitly insisted on their pound of flesh. At that juncture my brother was called up for military service, and in his opinion it was unavoidable that our business would break up, its glory ending in the bankruptcy court.

Our one year's independence ended in the total loss of all our original, joint capital of 800 florins, but over and above that we managed to fritter away in our enterprise 8,000 florins of our creditors' money. That fact seemed incredible to us, but unfortunately it was only too true.

Up to that time I had never allowed myself to get worried about the definition of the word "bankruptcy." Up to that time I used to smile subconsciously perhaps at trite sayings about unpaid debts, but here I was faced with bankruptcy, stark and real, and my hair began bristling with the terror of it. I saw that to fail so ignominiously was equivalent to dying, yet I very much wanted to live. My hankering after physical existence was as strong as my aversion to moral extinction. The fine which I imposed on my body and on my life in the shape of sheer hard work and renunciation of life's many amenities as an atonement for the irresponsibilities of our first year of independence, furnished me with the guarantee that I would never again let things come to such a pass.

This was not bankruptcy, after all. Seeing me turn over a new leaf, so to say, our creditors did not insist on prompt settlement and some of them to this day remain staunch friends with me. I managed to pay off all our debts within the space of two years.

My neighbours, the shoemakers of Zlin, found themselves more than once in the same predicament as I had been, the only difference between us being that for many of them a bankruptcy was synonymous with physical death. The worst off amongst the shoemaking fraternity was my uncle, Frantisek Bata. He was the first local shoemaker to lose his independence through me. Shortly before we started our business I paid him a visit. I found him in bed, dug right into a heap of straw. On top of him was a motley of old, ragged clothes, and although the time of day was only early afternoon, his room was practically in darkness, owing to the fact that his window was stuffed tight with something to keep out the draught. It was bitterly cold that day.

I looked round to see if my uncle had any fuel about his place, or any foodstuffs. There was nothing to be seen to feed the mean, rusty little iron stove with, and it was quite evident that no fire had been lit in it for some time. Not far from the bed I saw a lump of very hard bread, which had been gnawed on from every angle. My uncle, on my entry, removed all the rags that covered his face, so as to be able to see who it was that had come to see him. He recognised me immediately. When I asked him whether he felt ill, he replied that he must have caught a bit of a chill. He was rather abashed, and apologised for the dismal state of his room.

I suggested that I should send him something to eat, but he waved away my suggestion, saying that he wanted nothing of the kind. He pointed to the piece of gnawed-about bread, saying that he still possessed four florins to buy leather with when the time comes for selling shoes. He was very proud and would have starved sooner than beg

for a bit of sustaining food. He was not much of a craftsman, not even a middling one.

This could best be seen at the fair, when he was one of a score of fellow-tradesmen. His little booth would display at most four pairs of shoes, and he used to consider himself lucky if he managed to sell two pairs, getting three florins for them. Although a somewhat slow worker, my uncle was no idler, by any means. Even his hibernating in bed served its useful purpose, for we were only half-way through February, and prospects of doing any business were nil.

There were assuredly a good many people in our district who, like my uncle, used to retire at times of the poorest business prospects to their beds, so as to avoid the expense of heating, lighting, clothing, and, to some extent, of eating. There were also men who throughout the winter months would light no lamps, maintaining that their earnings did not warrant even that sort of outlay.

My uncle was a worker and a stickler, but no one in our district was over-anxiously looking for those virtues alone. The present terminal railway line was not then traversing our part of the country, and trade was slack, partly through bad transport facilities.

I taught my uncle how to make children's slippers. He could now sew twenty pairs of them in a week.

Even these very modest, but continuous and regular earnings, enabled my uncle to get well physically and to rid himself of his cough which had been his particular affliction. There was no more moss stuffed into the window frame to keep out the cold, the room got properly aired, there was a cheerful, regular little fire glowing in the stove, and the bed was treated to clean sheets.

## **MY YOUTHFUL DREAMS OF A GENTLE LIFE**

Upon my leaving school and being apprenticed to my father, I had a notion that human society was divided into two classes, gentry and the common herd.

This classification holds good even among school boys. Those of us who went on to a higher school, were the young gentlemen, while the others who had to become apprentices in one trade or another, were convicts in servitude for the rest of their lives.

The life led by the youngsters at a grammar school had to mould itself on the model of the gentry, and in such circumstances it was only natural for such boys to promenade about the town after four o'clock in the afternoon just as leisurely as their tutors, while we, the apprentices at the bench and in shops behind the counters, had to work late into the night. That such an order of things was a natural one was recognised not only by the parents, but even by the less fortunate brothers of such boys, who would perform manual labour while their student brothers meandered about.

The learning of a trade was my own choice, but despite that fact I also wanted to be counted amongst the gentry, or to become one of them, to try and gain admission into the circle of the elite and their more refined surroundings, cleaner places of assembly, where I could meet people of a better social standing than mine. That was the reason why I strove hard to get into the company of the grammar school boys, and for the sake of that ambition I had to undergo fights and rebuffs which can be neither adequately described nor assessed.

After lunch and supper, in the scant time at my disposal, I picked up scraps of genteel talk from the perusal of books, and having clothed myself in my Sunday best, I ventured to approach sundry groups of the noble society of scholars. I noticed that all and every movement of mine were closely watched by the son of a master ropemaker, an apprentice like myself who happened to be the only one among all the apprentices who succeeded in being treated on a footing of equality with the scholars.

I listened for quite a long while to their conversation, waiting for an opportunity to show them that I, too, could talk prettily in well-set phrases. They were just discussing whether it would

be better to walk on beyond the place their excursion had taken them, or whether it would not be better to go straight home'. I jumped at such a splendid opportunity, remarking that, most certainly it would be better for us to return home, seeing that a thunderstorm was on its way. The ropemaker lad, decked out in his genteel finery, jeeringly remarked that he and his scholar friends knew better than a cobbler's 'prentice as what was to be done. That was a shock. I cannot quite recollect what happened after that trenchant remark. I can remember, though, that the lot of them turned silent all of a sudden, and as for myself, many years afterwards I was still sorry for not having treated the ropemaker to a good whacking for his impudence, irrespective of the fact that at that time no fine distinction was made between youthful bravery and down-right roughness.

Although my father quite liked to see me moving in genteel company, I was not allowed to indulge in any genteel fancies during the work-a-day week. At eighteen years of age, having served my term of apprenticeship, I arrived at the conclusion that I was old enough to strike out on my own account. To that end I managed to persuade my elder brother and my older sister to join me in the formation of a company, so that we could become factory-owners, or, in other words, members of society. Our father was aware of the fact that we would be taking out of his business more than 800 florins which we jointly inherited from our mother. He reminded us, and me in particular, that I was taking away with me the experience and business knowledge I had gained during the travels for which he had paid. He did not want to gain anything by it, but merely wanted to point out that I should not underestimate the endowment that came from him. In that he was quite right, too.

The choice of place for our own establishment caused us no worry at all. Sentiment had a lot to do with our preference. We chose Zlin only for the reason that it happened to be the place of our birth, paying no heed to the fact that it was remote



from both the railway and fair-sized township with trading opportunities, and that in effect it offered no facilities whatever for the furtherance of our undertaking.

Our application for a manufacturing license was filed in the name of my brother Antonin, as I myself at that time was only eighteen years of age and in accordance with statutory requirements could only become my brother's assistant. We rented two small rooms, and these were soon filled to capacity with machinery and material, both of which we acquired without paying cash for. The machines we bought on the instalment plan, and for the raw material we gave promissory notes. Right from the start we arranged our production on proper factory lines and we were not dismayed in the least over the fact that our factory had only two windows.

We fixed our working hours from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. with a one hour's break for lunch at mid-day. At my father's place in Hradiste we used to start work at daybreak and leave off when it was time to go to bed, which was as a rule about 10 p.m.

We did not supply any meals to our workmen. We introduced a regular weekly pay-day on Saturdays, which was a change from the old system in our trade, according to which the workers got their wages account made up in the spring and the autumn, but chiefly upon departure from their places of employment. Our new arrangement was a sensible one, and I gained some valuable hints about it during the time when my father used to send me to one or the other factory workshops as a temporary factory hand, whenever he wanted to find out some information about a new machine.

Things were much worse with regard to the work which my brother and I had ear-marked for ourselves. Although both he and I started work in turn at 6 o'clock in the morning every day even during the winter months, the work as a whole did not benefit by it, for we were ashamed of it. Having established myself as a manufacturer, I felt I could show the world that I knew what society expected of a fellow. We went to our work in our Sunday clothes and used to spend an hour

at billiards in a nearby cafe each afternoon, whilst at night we mixed with our "betters" over a small glass of beer. During the day my brother and I used to argue as to who was to do the more genteel work and who the manual labour. Whilst we thus argued, neither one nor the other job was done, except the signing of our promissory notes, which function my brother, as the principal responsible, performed with great flourish and ostentation.

Things went on like that from autumn to spring. In the spring our occupation underwent a change inasmuch as my brother had to cease signing any more bills, for our credit was exhausted. All he could do then was to sign notes prolonging the maturity of our old bills, there being no funds to meet them. By the time summer was over our creditors lost all the respect due as from supplier to customer. They threatened us with court proceedings. The proceedings duly came, and distraint on our property was attempted. As far as goods were our own property, I pledged them with the bank against a loan of 800 florins, which sum was used by me for paying off the more vociferous of our creditors, who had already begun to drag us down into misery and humiliation.

Alas ! How black the capitalist soul, how unjust this world of ours ! We did as much work as the other gentlefolk, even more than they, for while we started our work at 6 o'clock in the morning they never started theirs before 8, or even 9 o'clock; as for spending money, why, we spent least of them all ! At the restaurant we frequently ordered a small glass of beer for the two of us, until the other guests started poking fun at us, and until my host began looking askance when he saw us coming. We did not even smoke, and all this notwithstanding, we were to be ousted from genteel society, and were to give up our social position as manufacturers.

At that time my brother was called up for a three years' term of compulsory military service. When we realised that there were still some of our bills totalling about 8,000 florins in circulation, and that apart from them we owed several

thousands of florins in open accounts, while on the other hand our assets did not quite reach the figure of 100 florins, my brother wrote me saying that I should file our petition of bankruptcy and clear out. Bills then falling due remained unpaid, "hell's bells" were in full ring for me. Everybody, our creditors particularly, began to mete out justice. They told us quite candidly what they thought of us even before we joined the ranks of gentry. It was quite evident they meant me to understand them thoroughly well. They put more energy into their educational work than the priests who used to teach me at school all about morals, and considerably more zest than the school-master who tried to teach me where to look for a country on a map, or how to write my name. By and by I began to see that the black-hearted capitalists were quite right in what they said, and that the genteel mode of life is not suitable for anyone who does not secure for himself access to the treasury of the State or the town.

I stopped seeking out genteel society, or rather kept out of the hostelries, and that gave me more time to think about the ethics of life. I began to calculate how much money I should make if all my spare moments were filled with useful labour, even if by that term was meant the despised manual, and therefore ungentlemanlike, work.

Just as a lump of ice will not dissolve the moment it is thrown into a roaring furnace, so my longing to be one of the gentry could not be suppressed at once. For that reason I at first placed my shoemaker's stool into some obscure corner of our workshop, where I could not be seen, but from where I could see every one who entered. I did not wish anyone to know how deeply I had sunk. However, that period of shame-facedness soon passed. It did not take long for the work to absorb all my interest. All the blessings of my life started from then. I found how silly I had been in my attempts at imitating idle people, be they of the genteel or the common class. It was in work that I found more and more fascination and inmost satisfaction as time went by.

By doing all the jobs of an operative I found ways and means which led to a saving of material and a simplification of the various operations. From then on I was not hampered by any lack of capital or credit. My finished goods were sold to people in Vienna, who paid cash on delivery, but who of course were in a position to dictate their price to me. I showed an order like that to my supplier of raw material and asked him for a week's credit against my bill. He laughed at me, but finally he gave the system a trial in view of the smallness of the transaction involved. I used to go and fetch my raw material off the midnight train which passed through Otrokovice Station (about twelve miles from Zlin), carrying the stuff on my back. On my return, I worked all night cutting up the material with the help of one of my men, and distributed it among the operatives in the morning. The men had to work day and night. Then while they went to take rest I used to go to town to deliver my goods, and bring fresh supplies of raw material, and the necessary cash for paying out wages.

Sometimes it would happen that I paid my creditors or my suppliers more money than I at first intended to pay them, and had nothing left to pay my people's wages. In such cases they were only given small advances to keep them in bread, but even so, as a rule more bread was wanted than there was money to go round. Those of my men who enjoyed credit at the local shops voluntarily waived their right to an advance in favour of their less fortunate mates, but when the little heap of coins on the table had shrunk to a mere handful of nickels (which I, incidentally, would have liked to use in my own household), it often happened that some still hungrier fellow came into the room, and I simply could not withstand the pleading, hang-dog look in his eyes when they fell on those poor nickels.

My sister would then start crying at the fact that we had no bread in the house ourselves for a whole week and no credit at the baker's as we had overlooked that worthy's account on several previous occasions. In spite of substantial

and frequent payments on account to my creditors, I had to carry on my work under the constant barrage directed at me by these tradesmen.

My Jewish creditors were far easier to deal with. They were evidently informed about the true state of things in Zlin by their brethren in faith at that place, and were well aware that extreme measures against me would be fruitless. But they no doubt also got to know that I kept paying my debts with something that could not be taken away by an order of the court—that I was paying with the bloody sweat of my brow.

With Christmas drawing near, we stood in need of more money for our workers. I journeyed all over Austria (as it was then) to collect accounts due to me from my sundry customers. The weather was rather wet and I was walking practically in my bare feet. I had written to my sister and asked her to have a pair of leather boots made for me—as at that time we made no such boots ourselves. As I was walking towards Zlin, or rather, sprinting towards it, the soles of my boots gave way and I reached my home in a disconsolate way having passed people on their way to midnight service at the church.

To the annoyance of my sister, I awoke rather late next morning having had but little sleep during my journey, and what sleep I did have was snatched on the wooden benches of third class railway carriages. I found my new boots at the bedside, and quickly put them on with the intention of looking in once more at the nearby hostelry, where the local gentry were wont to foregather. But alas ! I had barely taken up a cue to play a game of billiards, when who should walk in but a shoemaker from the public bar next door. At the sight of me, he started jeering provocatively at my new pair of boots, until he burst out with, "And who is going to pay for these fine boots, you conceited beggar?"

Bawling at me like that, the irate shoemaker pointed at my feet, and looked meaningly around the room full of the town's gentry.

This dressing-down had quite a salutary effect upon me. Never afterwards did I put on a suit of clothes without satisfying myself beforehand that it had been duly paid for.

It was quite clear that my mentors did not consider my education finished yet, and that it still wanted some strenuous efforts on their part to complete it.

At the end of the year I took stock of my position by carefully setting out all my assets and liabilities. The trade school instructor in charge of evening (continuation) classes for apprentices made out the balance sheet for me on proper book-keeping principles. Not that stock-taking was absolutely essential in my case, for I knew by heart the whereabouts of every shred of material about my place and every one of my obligations, be they ever so small, and I knew how my affairs stood in a general sort of way. But the systematic stock-taking proved a boon to me all the same, seeing that all the figures became properly marshalled into orderly sums.

It appeared that my assets very nearly equalled my liabilities at that time. It was not surprising to me, but it came as a surprise to the people who still required some more proof of this bit of a miracle. However, it was neither a miracle, nor mere chance that things had changed thus. It was the result of my having learnt how to make good use of my time. The time well used brought a quick turnover. A quick turnover brought in ready cash settlements, and ready cash thus available made it possible for me to buy my raw material cheaply.

I was in every respect ahead of my educated, well-trained competitors. It was I who bought the material, cut it up, distributed it amongst the operatives; took it over and examined every single pair of finished shoes, I who paid out the wages to the workmen and did all the necessary book-keeping with the utmost speed at the greatest possible saving of time, of material, of money. My proficiency became so great that I managed to serve out material to a hundred workmen for a whole week ahead, to form a judgment concerning

the quality of their output, to account for every single pair of shoes made, to allot new work to the hands for a whole week in advance, to enter up in each operative's personal account book the jobs accepted and delivered by him, to pay to all the employees their wages and to account for them, to account for and enter up all matters concerning customers, suppliers, and, generally speaking, to attend to anything and everything connected with the production and sales side of the business to such a good purpose that I could take a hand in the actual workshop operations throughout the week except Saturday.

My books showed that I still had a little or no assets, but on the other hand I had the feeling of being a rather prosperous independent business man, for I knew that it was merely a question of a comparatively short time until the day when my worries about creditors would be a thing of the dim past, when I would have the right to stand up to any man.

By the middle of 1896 I had nearly reached this dearly fought-for goal, when all of a sudden I received news of the financial breakdown of a Viennese firm of suppliers. I attached no importance whatever to the matter on the first day. I merely felt sorry for my father, knowing that he had frequently and unhesitatingly given that firm his signature for bills of accommodation, in the same way as we, or rather as my brother, used to do a year previously.

My account with the firm was all square, and when I was told by my brother one day that they wanted me to sign some bills for them, giving the assurance that they would take them up themselves upon maturity as usual, I forbade my brother to sign such bills. Moreover my brother knew that we did not buy anything from these people.

Next day I had a letter from my brother, full of despair, in which he told me that despite my veto he could not withstand the pleadings of one of the partners of the firm, who recited to my brother all the acts of kindness the firm had lavished on our father and on ourselves in the past, and who assured my

brother that Mr. Thomas—referring to me—would never get to know anything about the bills, anyhow. My brother confessed having signed bills totalling an amount of 20,000 florins.

Frightened out of my wits, I imagined I already saw the bailiffs at our door, clamouring for admittance. I ran into the hall where my bicycle was leaning against the wall, and pedalled post-haste towards Uherske Hradiste.

The startled looks on the faces of passers-by told me that I had gone bare-headed and forgotten to put on my hat—such a thing at that time was regarded as downright craziness—I returned and fetched my hat.

Arriving at my destination, I at once sought out our legal adviser and he whole-heartedly took in all the sad details of the tragedy that had befallen us. Disdaining supper and not bothering to light a lamp, there the two of us sat, deliberating late into the night. That same night I took a train to Vienna, fully aware of the fact that I was bound by law to foot the bills.

It did not matter a bit that I had not had any consideration in return for the bills. That argument might have applied as far as the firm was concerned, but it carried no weight in regard to the people who had bought the bills from the firm. They had to be paid by us, while we could only try to recover our losses from the bankrupt firm. Although the law did in fact contain a clause, which pronounced as invalid any bills signed by a conscript soldier on active service, there was on the other hand to be considered a business which was registered in the name of my brother, albeit a soldier.

I could do nothing but enter into an undertaking towards the firm's creditors in Vienna to the effect that I would honour my duped brother's bond. The amounts in question exceeded many times the tiny fortune I had gained.

However, I soon managed to overcome even this new crisis. True enough, the adverse balance of assets and liabilities in this case was greater than in the first crisis, but it



was happily offset by moral assets in the shape of my belief in work, the goodwill both of my suppliers and my customers, and the faith my work-people reposed in me.

Yet this crisis did bring about a moral mishap in our family, for my poor father went bankrupt. I was unable to save him. It was only at a later juncture that I could make good the losses which my father's bankruptcy had caused his creditors, as far as their whereabouts could be ascertained and their claims investigated.

## **MY FIRST TOUCH WITH MACHINES**

I ascertained one day that I should be unable to fulfil a contract, in respect of the supply of goods, which I had concluded with a well-known firm in Vienna. According to that contract, I undertook to supply them with leather soled canvas shoes, an article which at that time had not yet been manufactured in our provinces.

It was a case of over-rating my ability as an instructor. I had thought I could teach the making by hand of nailed and inverted footwear to a large number of workers in the short time at my disposal.

My good name was once more in jeopardy, and this time it was a question of whether I was to be relied upon in the fulfilment of a supplier's contract. Only something quite out of the ordinary could possibly save my skin. Was I to turn to machines as the means to that end? At that time I was reading the writings of Tolstoy, with their gospel of plain, primitive living, and I became an ardent disciple of that school. My ears hummed with the stories told by neighbouring tradesmen, who had the same wonderful tales to tell about machines as those told by the Austrian General Staff about what they could do with an enemy army.

However, there was no time left for indulging in any abstract philosophies. Here was an obligation that had to be met by a given time, and help had to be enlisted, never mind where it came from.

The cutting out of the bottom parts of the shoes was a most cumbersome process, and for that reason I decided to buy a bookbinder's press, thinking that such a press, used in conjunction with cutting blades, could be made to turn out big quantities of the required bottom parts. It did not work. The contraption had to be fundamentally remodelled.

That proved rather a harder job than I thought. It required more energy than the construction of our electric power house, considering what little knowledge of technical things was available in our district owing to its remoteness from the outside world at that time.

The success of the new design was great, and my animosity toward things mechanical grew much less pronounced. My greatest difficulty lay in the problem of producing soles, and this was still awaiting its solution. I therefore went to Prague and looked up a shoemaker who carried on his trade in the Vinohrady suburb of the city, and was at the same time responsible for the publication of a shoe trade journal. He was to advise me what to do, and to tell me all he knew about shoemaking machinery. All he could tell me, however, was the thing I could hear over and over again in our part of the country, something to the effect that certain people in Germany had invented certain shoemaking machines and had put them to use, but that on the other hand manually made footwear was in demand on all sides and that the machines were falling in disuse.

When I left home to go to Prague, my clothing consisted of a thin alpaca suit, and my feet were encased in canvas shoes. I did not even have a handbag with me. Paying no heed to my informant's discouraging words in reply to my queries, I went straight from Prague to Frankfort-on-Main. I knew that some time previously we had a letter from a firm in Frankfort, telling us that they were making some shoemaking machines. I did not happen to have their address with me, but on approaching a friendly Frankfort policeman—who seemingly knew more about shoemaking machinery than the

lot of us—promptly and without hesitation directed me to the Moenus A. G. It was only with some trepidation that I mustered sufficient courage to make my entry into the palatial headquarters of the rich Frankfort company, seeing how poorly clad I was and what scant knowledge I had of the German language.

I felt positively thunderstruck at the sight that met my eyes. Here I was merely on the lookout for some punching and stitching machines, the existence of which had come to my knowledge, and now I found myself face to face with a vast array of the most diverse machinery. There were machines for every imaginable shoemaking operation, with not even the slightest job unprovided for. But alas! All these machines were fitted for being driven by steam power, and I neither possessed such an installation, nor dared to dream of getting one. Apart from that, the prices of the machines were quite beyond my reach.

In the circumstances, all I bought in Frankfort were some hand-operating tools, such as a pair of cleverly designed pincers, a pair of cutters and a magnetic hammer.

All the way home my head was getting hot, but not with the worry as to whether I should be able to fill my contract with the customer. That worry somehow appeared ridiculously small and puny compared with the giants of steel I had seen with my own eyes—Titans capable of turning out a hundred, nay, a thousand times greater quantities of goods than I undertook to supply. It was quite sufficient for me to have tracked down the source of a power so tremendous, even if that source, for the time being anyway, proved inaccessible to me.

My thoughts were agitated by the opinion I held at that time concerning human society, the opinion about life which I, at twenty years of age, had formed from reading the works of Tolstoy, from the poems of Svatopluk Cech (many of which I knew by heart), and from all the literature of my people

dealing with the history of the Czech Brethren—but most of all from what I had heard discussed by men around me.

I was a collectivist then, and a bit of a communist, but most decidedly a socialist.

CAPITALIST SOCIETY AS NOW CONSTITUTED WAS REGARDED BY ME AS FIT FOR BAD PEOPLE ONLY, SUCH AS EXPLOITERS AT ONE END AND SLUGGARDS AT THE OTHER. I KEPT ON DREAMING ABOUT THE SIMPLE LIFE AS PREACHED BY TOLSTOY.

As soon as my debts—or rather those of my brother—were got out of the way, and as soon as I had earned a little bit over and above that, I thought of buying a small farm and to sow just sufficient to supply the everyday needs of myself and my family.

In my opinion, towns existed only to enslave the tillers of the soil, and factories to make slaves of their workmen, while as to people in business—why, they fattened on the labour of the whole community.

Now if I should require a new hoe or any other agricultural implement they would be produced in a communal, socialistic factory, as depicted in Zola's "Toil."

On my way back from Germany I saw through the windows of my railway carriage the Rhenish landscape fleeting by, dotted all over with industrial works—many of them being factories that turned out shoes.

One could see soundly-constructed human dwellings, and a sturdy race of healthy, well-clad people.

All along the Rhine, steam tugs were hauling a great number of barges, and I calculated what great stores of all the necessities of life they must hold. I could divine where all this wealth and prosperity sprang from. They came out of those steely giants, who at human behest make all that mankind may require for an ample life. There, down the Rhine, the boats presumably bore seaward all the merchandise made

in excess of the people's needs, to be exchanged in foreign parts for such commodities as could not be made at home,—all this to be stowed away in the holds of the vessels that plough their way, line after line, along the Rhine toward the open sea.

**And there and then my feverish brain produced an image of that factory chimney my father had prophesied, with myself standing right in the middle of those steely giants, grouping them according to their allotted tasks and firing them on to toil, TO TOIL !**

But here the socialist in me awoke, and chasing away the image of the industrialist, abused me roundly as an exploiter and slave-driver. No, I must not become a hated employer, after all. I must not become that, not beyond earning enough to give me the means for buying myself a small farm, I kept on repeating to myself.

However, the socialist, in his turn, was driven out by my uncle, by Vlcek and numerous workers of mine, whom I frequently sought out and in whose little homes I noticed what an improvement in living conditions their regular—even if small—earnings were bringing about.

Whenever there was any rumour about my inability in the air, these people used to slouch past me with terror in their eyes, plainly anxious as to whether Bata would manage to keep things going or not, just as if their existence, and not my very own, were at stake.

Was it fair to forsake these people ? What were they to do pending the arrival of that vaunted collectivist state, of some kind of socialist dispensation ?

## **HOW I TURNED EMPLOYER**

At home I came across a number of booklets issued by Messrs. Keats & Co. I quite correctly guessed that there must be some dwarf to be found somewhere in that world of Titanic mechanical power, who would and who could be the means

of my salvation. I found that dwarf tucked away in one of Keats' catalogues. It was a punching apparatus, which increased manifold the output of my workers and ensured for me the timely filling of my contract.

I myself learned to perfection how to handle these steel dwarfs, and in turn taught others how to use them. I set up a workers' organization wherein they could be properly utilized, and by such means and the mobilization of further technical aids of an advanced nature I managed to increase production to a degree which, in respect of quantity and cheapness of manufacture, surpassed many big factories that were in the meantime fitted for the same kind of work at an immense outlay of capital.

The assets side of my balance sheets went up by leaps and bounds in excess of the side marked "liabilities." There were already more assets than the sum required for buying the little farm of my youthful, ardent dreams, more than the means I required for my living, and even more than what, in addition, was required for my brother's and my sister's livelihood.

While I was on the defensive against people's capital, while I fought in defence of my brother's and my sister's good name, while I worked to find my own crust of bread, my labours were justified on moral grounds, gleaned from my books and from the talk I had heard all round.

But now that firm ground under my feet was gone. Not that it mattered much while I was busy, for did I not do something the people wanted and found to be necessary? It was I who obtained the jobs for people who were clamouring for them, I who sold the products of their labour to people who were asking for them and who showed their satisfaction with the goods I sold them.

Of course, things took on a different aspect when I left my work for a little while, either to join the company of some cultured people to whom I could deliver a bit of a lecture or

when I paused to get hold of some newspaper or a book. On all sides, out of every nook and corner, I could hear derisive shouts. "Exploiter, slave driver."

They did not exactly mention my name at that juncture, though what they all meant was an ideal, which now began assuming a shape in the workshop of my soul which was to be the new basis for my work, and which now had to fight hard for its existence with its elder brother, the old socialist in me.

My friends found excuses for me, saying that I did not belong to the company of the wicked ones, seeing how small my business was. In other words, I was not regarded as quite so big a villain as the others.

And I resented being regarded as a villain. I began considering and read all there was to be read about co-operative trading and right away I remembered the experience I had when co-operating with my brother, when all kinds of work were discussed, but none ever got done.

I could see on all sides how bad the results of "Co-operative" work were, even in cases where the co-operation was limited to the joint work of two brothers.

I saw plainly that I would not be able to co-operate even with my own brother, unless he recognised to the fullest possible extent my right to the last word. Accordingly, I made out an agreement embodying my right to that effect, and my brother fully agreed to it.

I was wondering how things would turn out in a company which pursued the policy of distributing all its profits amongst its partners.

Where, in such circumstances, would we find the money to buy the steam power plant, which was essential if those German and American steel giants were ever to be enlisted in our service? There seemed to be no way out of that dilemma. There was nothing for it but that I should remain at my

post, that I should become what I myself had previously considered in my ignorance, the hated factory owner, the exploiter, the slave driver, if I were to be able to serve my people well and truly.

That victory once won, there came the 8 h. p. steam engine, the steel-bodied assistants, the first, real factory building and the chimney, foreseen by my old father, even if that chimney was only of sheet iron to begin with.

By 1904 there were already three such sheet iron chimneys belching forth their smoke. I kept on buying up small, second-hand steam engines, which did very indifferent service, and it soon became imperative that new, proper motive power should be installed, and that a new, big factory building and further, specialised machinery should be made available.

Seeing how many new problems awaited their solution, I did not put my faith in myself alone, with all my work and the experiences I had gained when travelling in sundry European countries.

I therefore left for the United States of America that same year, taking three of my young workmen with me.

Over there I found many fascinating things, and most of all was charmed with the average American citizen. He did not worry his head with prejudices about the dignity or otherwise of any work he did. Problems of that kind had been solved for him generations ago by his grandfather.

Why, to sell newspapers in the street was good enough a job for the son of even the highest-salaried official in the land, or for the offspring of a millionaire, and not only for the son of a tenement dweller. There were no students-cum-gentlemen about.

There I saw rolled-up shirt sleeves and work with a smile to it. Even a boy six years of age seemed big enough to his dad to be allowed to start making his own, independent fortune, a fortune in the disposal of which he would have his own



say. That would teach him to become independent. He was not to be smothered by his father's superiority. He was to consider himself from the outset on par as a citizen.

I am a businessman, you are a businessman, and our respective smartness will be measured according to how much either of us is going to make.

The father's eye lights up full of joy upon hearing that his son has made a fresh dollar somehow and the son is proud of his father at every new success the latter may be able to score. Such family characteristics transfer themselves to the whole community. Mr. Miles pointed out to me the factory of his competitor and said : "Just imagine what a smart guy he must be, making such a wad of dollars that he can afford to pay one million greenbacks to the Treasury in taxes each year." The most interesting part of this remark was the fact that Mr. Miles was working at a loss, having always more debts than assets. Yet he was proud to know a competitor who was smarter than himself. The American's soul is not beset with any doubts as to whether an individual may or may not try to amass a fortune.

Doubts of such a kind lived on in our society at home only subconsciously, thanks to the old Slavonic Law which was only forcibly ousted by the Roman Law. According to the Slavonic Law all the members of a community had to deliver all the fruits of their labour into a communal barn. There they were distributed amongst the members of the community by the elder at his own discretion, not by any means according to merit, but as dictated by the elder's conscience. That was an old family socialism. This subconscious veneration of the Slavonic Law was kept alive in us by Russian authors, and principally by Tolstoy. In such a soil the new kind of socialism as propagated by Karl Marx thrived luxuriously, too. In substance it is identical with the Old Law, merely being extended to humanity at large.

As regards machinery and works organisation, I did not find many novel features in America. I was not surprised at

such being the case, as far as the machines were concerned, for I had kept myself posted about any new developments through having kept up a lively correspondence with American builders of machinery all the time. The only thing that struck me as peculiar in their organisation was the grouping of machines, which I altered several times in the course of a year, until I managed to find a system which they, even in America, found to be the most serviceable.

The deftness shown by American workers was amazing. At some of the machines in particular they developed a speed in output which was ten times that of my own people.

For that reason I myself took on jobs as an operative at the factory, well knowing how hopeless it is to try and explain things to people if one cannot demonstrate the work in practice. Moreover, I also wanted to feel the effects of fatigue which a mechanical output of such comparatively high degree must have on one's body. I had brought over with me a pretty high opinion about myself as a doer of things. I was convinced that I should be able to work smartly on shoemaking machines of any given kind, but this "cocksureness" did me a lot of harm in America.

When asked what particular job of work I knew well, I proudly asserted that I knew them all equally well. The smile on the face of the staff manager, and his reply that they had no use for me was something I could not explain to myself for quite a long while. But after I had succeeded in getting myself quenched up in company with other applicants for a job, and after I had been tried out at one operation, I began to understand that never in all my life would I be able to learn all the operations to such a degree of perfection as that already demanded all over America. Only then could I understand and appreciate how justified the staff manager was in derisively grinning at my boastful assertion.

Through the influence of the man I was lodging with, one Berka, I was able for some time to hold a job in a pretty badly run factory at Lynn. I wanted to stand on my own legs, but

work was not easily come by. Anyone holding a job had to get up at 7 o'clock, whilst the unemployed men get up at 5 o'clock and sometimes even before that in order to be at the factory gate—some of them a long way off—before work started.

How lucky I considered myself, when I was allowed to stand with rolled-up sleeves—the prerogative of Yankee nobility—at one or the other of the machines, to be examined to see whether I was fit to work it, with the workshop boss closely watching my performance. There was no need for me to look into his face to see what fate was to be mine.

That I knew from the laughter of the other job hunters who were behind me, all with their shirt sleeves rolled up and waiting for me to fail. They did not have to wait long, as a rule.

There were sometimes as many as twenty such tests for me in a day, and six times that number in the course of a week. That depressed my mind. I fully acquired the psychology of the worker. I did not care for any dollars that were brought to Europe from America. I cared for American dollars made on the spot. I wanted to be able to stand up to the American men.

On the occasion of one of these job hunting expeditions I vowed to myself that I would not take any food until I got a job. Then I got a job all right.

From being a tramp, I turned all of a sudden into a nobleman. My hands were torn and blistered, but my head sat firmly on my shoulders.

*With these observations, set down by Thomas Bata, ends his personal narrative of how his work began. Further we are publishing his reflections and manifestoes in which is reflected best his ideal of work and life.*

II

## PERIOD OF SEARCHING



*Anyone who looks deeper into the life of Thomas Bata finds that this man as a human being and as an enterpriser had grown and gained strength only by surmounting crisis. With the passing of the first crisis we see in the 19 year old Bata how he overcomes his personal crisis. What is significant in this change? The recognition that business is not easy, that it is not a simple private matter, that the question of existence in business depends on the service one can give to others through it. At that time he did not express this change by words, but it found expression through action which was for him always more than words. At that time he began to produce and sell "Batovsky", a kind of very cheap, light textile shoes, so cheap that anyone could have them.*

*There are no direct remarks about how Thomas Bata looked upon that time of his learning. How he settled his spiritual struggles in which—as shows the remarks found after his death—was tossed the soul of this young, unusually talented, passionately sensitive man? What were those fights which changed the admirer and reader of Russian philosophy of passive simplicity into the man of iron will? What were the impulses which pressed the young Thomas Bata to discard his dreams about the simple peasant's life and to put all his heart into industrial work on a world-wide scale? We do not know! All his reflections which we further publish show the mature man who knows his task, and the way how to accomplish that, and who cannot be shaken even in the greatest storms and disturbances in which the whole civilised world was shattering in the beginning of this century.*

*When came into the head of Thomas Bata the idea of self-management of work and why? Only one statement from his occasional speeches gives some reply to this question: "I liked in America the better and more human relation between the worker and enterpriser. I am master, you are masters; I am a businessman, you are businessmen. I want that such system of life should be created between us in Zlin. I want that we should be somehow equal."*

But in the business and industrial world it is not sufficient to have only the will and ideas; he had these qualities in abundance, but nevertheless he was faced with great difficulties especially in 1908 when died his brother and the complete management of the undertaking was left in the hands of young Thomas Bata.

In the meantime comes the war. The tales speak of Bata's property gained during the great war. But never was this working and honest man nearer failure than after the war due to the war. With two factory buildings the Bata organisation goes into the year 1914. With four factory buildings and with machines and equipment by which peace-time production of shoes cannot be made, the undertaking comes out at the end of the war. And moreover, there is also a great passivum—debt of the defeated state which did not pay for the shoes taken. Here are also the heavy new taxes demanded by the newly born state. The only credit is some capable people whose life and health the undertaking preserved with work and food during the war. With those Thomas Bata begins to create, and in the struggle with obstacles with misery and resistance from left and right he begins to realise the dream of his youth about self-management of work. It is a Titanic effort that leads to the task of putting the economic machinery of human society on solid, reliable basis, and to save for it all those who make it able to run and to serve.

Now let us see how is reflected this period of fights and searchings in Bata's life from his speeches and public expressions:



## HOW THE FIRST MILITARY ORDER CAME TO ZLIN

Upto the outbreak of the Great War the industry of our town produced only textile shoes and sandals or similar light shoes for indoor use.

Immediately after the declaration of mobilisation against Serbia it was clear to all customers and industrialists that this industry would no more be needed. The moment I brought the news from the district town Uherske Hradiste all factories suspended work.

Incidentally, I was present at the moment when Mr. Janustik, the district magistrate, received orders for general mobilisation. A few minutes later I took a car and I was in Zlin.

The mobilisation order was very strict. All conscripted men had to join their regiments within 24 hours.

Next day I went to Otrokovice by a Passenger train. At Hulin I wanted to change this for the Express Mail to Vienna so that I might reach there earlier to secure an order for ammunition boots and thus save the economic position of our town and the lives of our men. Every second now counts.

Unfortunately I missed the train at Otrokovice. I tried to catch it otherwise. I took a coach and horses to catch it. Hubacek was driving me. He was a strong and tough boy. He had good horses and knew how to keep them in condition. We decided to catch the train even at the cost of the horses. All the way we kept standing in the carriage, with the reins in one hand and the whip in the other. I held my watch in my hand with eyes fixed on the hands and the figures and also on the milestones along the road. Our main desire at the moment was to reach the station at Hulin before the horses



failed, and Hubacek also understood it too well. We discerned the smoke of the locomotive near the sugar factory in Hulin. The last ray of hope we had of catching the train seemed to be disappearing. But the horses also understood that that was the time for them to sacrifice their lives for the man at whose hands they got it, and really they did what was obviously impossible. We had no time left to go to the station. I dashed to the railway enclosure across a goods train already in slow motion, and reached the Express train from the other side of the platform.

In Vienna I could not settle matters and the attempt was fruitless. I also received the same reply as the other applicants did :

There are already two "Consoicias" Companies, existing—one for supplying to soldiers at home and the other for the requirements of the War Ministry. "Both", they said "have a 15-year contract for the supply of shoes."

Sad was the way back from Vienna to Zlin. The people at home were in suspense whether they would have work in factories or at the war fronts. The horrors of modern mechanised warfare followed by the mobilisation orders, filled them with fear of certain death. From that time on I continued my visits to Vienna either by my old car Elca or by train.

I had to work rather in haste. The stern constable Kvapil at Zlin did not want delay, and then there was the sad news from Vienna of people being hand-cuffed and chained and dragged in case they were late to join the regiment after the mobilisation orders. The people waited at the station for my telegram.

On the third day I was successful in pocketing an order for 50,000 pairs of military shoes at a price that did not interest me in the least. It was noon, a few minutes after the departure of the Express from Vienna. About the offices of the War Ministry there was not a single car that could be engaged.

Then I ran hard towards the circular road. At that time my feet were fleet and healthy. There were several cars, but all occupied by military officers who had come to join their regiments, and in those days no man had the courage to encroach upon their reservations. There was only an empty carriage driving in quite an opposite direction. He agreed to drop me at the North Station but not without a hot discussion. At the station I found the train ready to whistle off. The amount I paid to the cab-driver was just enough to buy a tolerably good horse.

On the same day in Zlin I called on Stepanek, the Mayor, at the Town House and told him that I wanted to divide the order which I brought among all the local factories, and that I wanted to establish the new supplying Consorcium of Zlin shoe factories.

The first order for military shoes which was in the name of the firm T. & A. Bata, Zlin, only, was divided among five shoe producers in Zlin. Each got a part of the order according to the number of lasting machines they had. This filled the people of Zlin with great enthusiasm. I got very many thanks for this achievement, but I thought I did not deserve them all. It was not difficult to get the orders because about the time I visited Vienna the Great War had broken. It was difficult only for those who lost their courage and sat idle at home.

All the owners of these factories were young, healthy men fit for military service, and employed many workers who were also conscripted. It was a mere incident that I was the only man who was not a soldier. It was mere luck that all those men came through the War healthy and without any accident. And it was also a pure accident that I was the only man to meet with an accident. But war was not to be blamed for this. It was precipitated by my haste, which, as I found out later, was less important than I thought.

People were waiting anxiously at the station for my arrival, and their joy was beyond measure when stepping out of the train I told the happy news—I have brought work.

All through the war the undertaking was running under military control. The output of shoes during 1917 was at its highest when we produced 10,000 pairs a day and employed 5,000 people. But the serious lack of material, leather and skin, obliged us to make wooden shoes which we produced 5,000 pairs daily.

During the war many men worked in the factory. Soldiers from all districts and their families were supplied from our factory store. Although the prices of foodstuffs throughout old Austria had reached a terrible height, our firm supplied provisions to about 35,000 persons at prices a little higher than in peace-time. The difference in the prices was paid by the Company out of its own resources. This insured a generally quiet time for our firm and the town during the political destruction of the Austrian Empire with all its violent methods and ideas.

But the economic changes after the war told heavily upon it in the same way as it affected other shoe undertakings which worked on the shoe supplies. The long war and changes for the peace-time production made necessary heavy investments for new machines, because the present ones were not suitable for production of civil shoes and it was necessary to change them.

The condition of the market was completely disheartening. There was a great lack of raw material, and if there were any orders available, the prices were terrible. The people—customers—went barefooted and were still without any buying capacity.

We were much moved. We quickly reorganised the production and the workshops and wanted to continue on the pre-war policy of prices, but could not succeed in coming to

some understanding with the majority of shoe merchants. They did not like to understand the principle of lower and fixed prices, the more so when the demand was tremendous and the prices most lucrative. Then we started opening our own shops with popular fixed prices and slowly but firmly consolidated our undertaking for the new work.

In those days when political influence had affected all undertakings from all sides, Thomas Bata was successful in convincing his customers of the harmfulness of such influences and won their confidence. In the year 1922, during the great industrial and financial crisis, when hundreds of firms became bankrupt and hundreds of others ceased work, he did an act by which he gained the healthy support and sympathy of the public. In one day he reduced the prices of all goods by 500 per cent. The most considerate and careful undertakings gave vent to foolish remarks and waited to see the downfall of Bata. But Bata withstood everything. In the vehemence of this step he sold out all his stock, and thus transferred the blocked capital to a circulating one, and held the production at the same level of height as before. He reduced expenses and limited the loss, and from the year 1923 dated the regular and rapid growth of the undertaking, so that in place of four factory buildings in which the Bata undertaking was being run, 50 huge factory buildings were seen working at Zlin, 20 in Otrokovice (this was in 1932) when the founder, Thomas Bata, met with a tragic death.

At this time—after about 6 years from 1918 to 1923—ended Thomas Bata's period of apprenticeship and patient waiting. At this time he reached the zenith of his power which was steady and enduring. He knew what he wanted, and he wanted much, but he also knew how to attain that. At the time of terrific destruction of material and moral properties, wavering a nihilistic spirit of disbelief he found in work his own salvation and that of all human beings. He saw that old habits, relations and unity of people are shattered to pieces, and feels that on the old grounds cannot be built new buildings and that

the beginning must be entirely new and suited to the times. But how to give a start ? Bata did not find the solution on the spot at once. From his speeches during 1918 to 1923, it is manifest how hard he fought for the solution of the problem besides the problem of existence of his own undertaking. At last he achieved his end.

## **HOW APPEARS TO THOMAS BATA THE PROBLEM OF THE YEAR 1918**

**His article published on May 25, 1918**

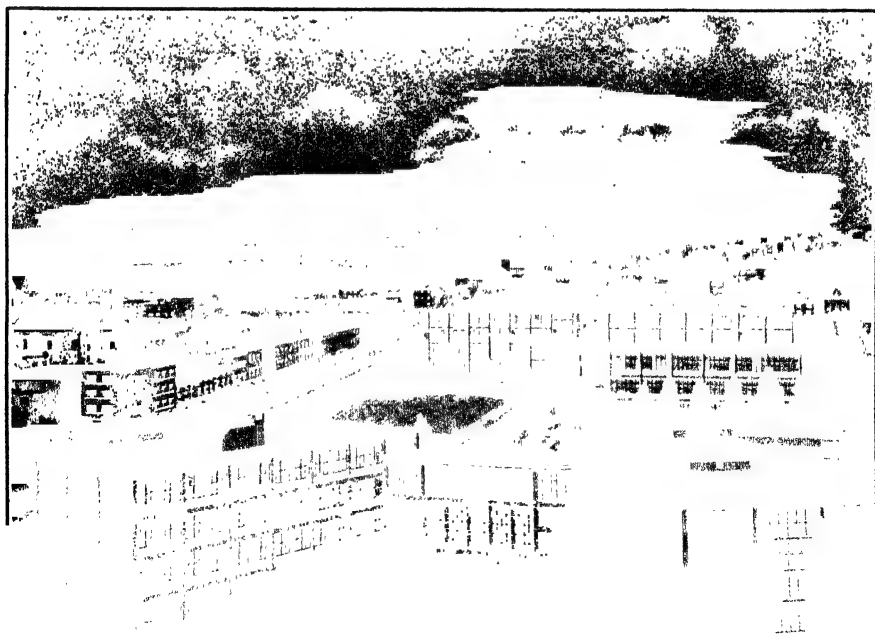
The war created in all sections of human undertaking a strange situation. With the great tension, as never before, we were watching the effects on the public life of the continuing course of war, the increment of prices, etc. It is, therefore, always those phenomenons that deeply interfere with our familiar lives. It is not possible for one to-day to withdraw himself before those news. They find him out, direct in the centre of his family and draw him into its vortex.

Whether we like it or not we must notice them, and not only notice but each of us must also fight them out. And thus, although we appear to be in the background, we have also to fight mainly for protecting our body and preserving our health. This struggle is, however, lightened by the possibilities of well paid work. Even when there is a continued increment in the prices of articles, the factory employees may carry on because of the possibilities of bigger earning, and thus, if the worse does not happen, he may be even in these days be satisfied.

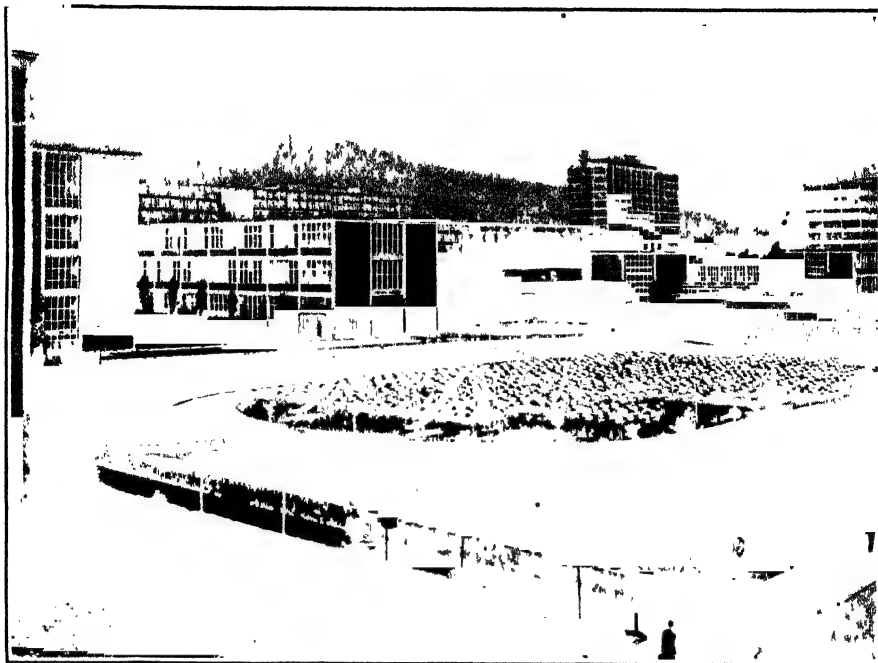
In our struggles of to-day we frequently forget our struggles for to-morrow. The War will come to an end sooner or later—and surely every one of us is waiting eagerly for that moment—but few of us realize that even with the coming of peace there will be no immediate end to our solitudes, because it is not a matter of one day to recover from the economic disaster caused by the war. It will take a pretty long time, and then will come a chance for us, of course, if we do not



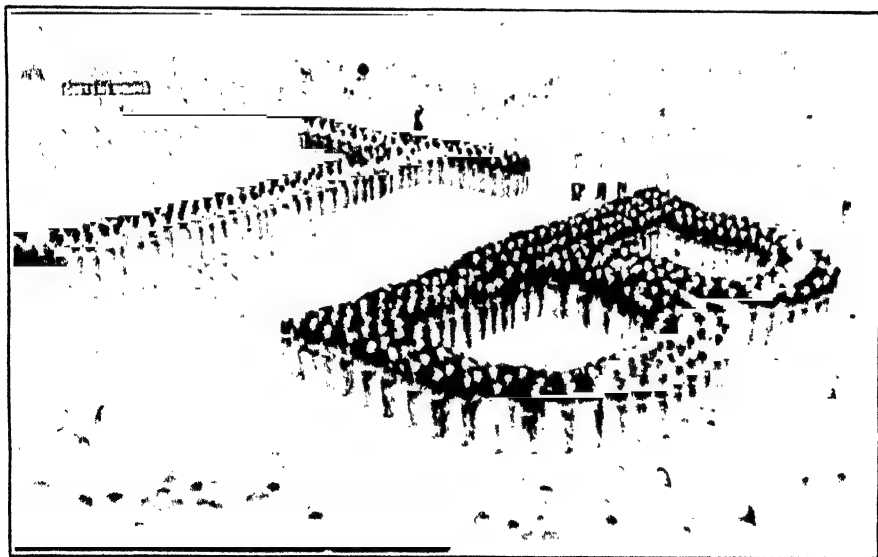
The interior of the famous "Peoples University" in Zlin.



The Masaryk schools in Zlin.



Schools for children in Zlín—children doing their morning exercise in the courtyard.



The first group of the Bata young men—in the year 1928 making the living initials of the late Thomas Bata's name. These men to-day are holding responsible positions in the Bata enterprise all over the world. Most of the Czechoslovak instructors in Batanagar are in this picture.

prove unequal to the new order of things and the incidental changes in public events. That moment will be particularly critical for the man who has to depend on his salary, for with the coming of peace and order he will have to face a new battle of defeating occasional difficulties.

Thus it is necessary for us to be on the guard that in our anxiety for to-day we do not forget to-morrow. Our foremost interest should be to ensure bigger earning possibilities of our workers even for the future.

How in future will be adjusted the factory's production, how the factory will meet the changing times, how it will have the possibilities of paying to its employees—these are the questions of the future. •

But here are lying also other questions. From the war front will come home many men who during their absence have lost their jobs. Those men will want to participate on the considerable earnings, which is allowed to their happier comrades who were freed from the war. And they will need the earnings, because they want to live, although the time might even be worse. And what if the undertaking for any reason—particularly owing to the unfavourable times for production—will be needed to limit the production? How will these men support themselves who might not get employment?

But this will give rise to other questions also. To-day there is no problem more serious than that of lodging, and that at a time when lodgings are crowded with people, so much so that they do not have even enough rest, so essential for their health. The need of family houses is the greatest. Could there be anything nicer than a man after his day's hard labour taking rest in his own house, refreshing himself in his own small garden, enjoying the sun and the breeze in a place which he can call his own?

Then we will be faced with numerous difficulties major as well as minor difficulties which will press us hard and the removal of which will not be so easy as before the war.



In addition to our physical needs, we will have to look to our spiritual needs as well, particularly education. To-day every sensible man understands that education influences not only our moral life but also improves our earning capacities. The centres of education are libraries, lecture halls, theatres, concerts, etc., the creation of which will also be an imperative necessity.

These will be the requirements not of one man but of all for whom the factory is the source of income. May be, many have already thought over it and have exchanged views with others. We should return to this question very often, and adopt the most suitable and workable scheme.

When we think of our future social and economic well-being, we find ourselves closer to the point where the interests of employees and employers become identical. And closer they draw in their daily contact, the greater is the benefit for both.

## **ENTHUSIASM**

### **Thomas Bata's Speech on 17-11-1918**

To-day I want to tell you how necessary it is to do your work with enthusiasm specially in this department. The object of my speech is to create in you that enthusiasm.

Those of you who worked here before the Great War, will see that to-day we produce entirely different kinds of goods through entirely different processes. This is new work also for those who worked here during the war-time, because during that period we produced ammunition boots, which did not require so much technical knowledge and skill as the present shoe production does.

Now we have to go in for that, and have to learn the new methods of production and that too very quickly.

The position of our enterprise is not rosy. In our factory it is necessary to produce big quantities of shoes to have the possibility of paying all of you and all other workers their wages and meeting the suppliers' bills for the supply of materials.

The demand of shoes is now considerable, but it is difficult to sell them, because all the business men are sufficiently cautious. They are so wise that they know that the products will be from day to day cheaper and, therefore, they are afraid of buying anything. Others are afraid of sacks, others of loss on railways, etc. In these days our salesmen make business with great difficulties. When they come from their tour in which they made a business, they find in their homes letters from the customers asking them not to supply the ordered goods. This state of affairs obliged us to expand the network of our shops. We should stop the production, for if our capital reserve is fully exhausted it is not possible to pay your wages and the cost of materials. But the sale of our goods in the shops is also going slowly. The public to-day demand shoes of different kinds from those during the war. Therefore, everybody must endeavour to produce such shoes as the public need and assist the managers of our shops in the sale of our goods. Our aim should be to supply to our shops only perfect shoes at the cheapest possible prices. This is a very heavy task for all of us, because, as I said, it will be a new production, the manufacturing process of which we all must first learn. If we all understand how important it is for all of us, who want to make our work easy and also the position of other inhabitants safe by supplying them perfect and, if possible, cheaper products, then surely this heavy task we will have done. Every one must understand that the well-being of all of us depends on our doing our work such as others may utilize it.

Those who hammer the lasting nails into the place where the stitcher must stitch because of thicker thread, keep us far from well-being. And workers or other citizens who buy such shoes lose their money, and in some cases their all. The sole of such shoes go off easily or in some cases the shoe is not waterproof. So it is necessary to create among us the normal spirit barring those who do not work honestly and the nature of their work is such that it does not help others in continuing the production. Such work has multiplied our difficulty

and as a consequence the average of the daily production of shoes is  $1\frac{1}{2}$  pairs per worker instead of 10 pairs as in American factories.

But who is to suffer most under such conditions? We all and mostly those who have little money to spare and spend. It is obvious that things cannot be as favourable in a place where the average of production per worker is  $1\frac{1}{2}$  pairs daily as in that where the average is 10 pairs each worker. This we can see best when we compare our prosperity with the prosperity of western countries, such as America, where a worker earns daily so much that out of his daily wages he can buy two pairs of good shoes. In our country a worker, even the best worker cannot do so, not only because his wages are not so high, but because he has only one and a half pairs of shoes to his credit.

A worker in America has more comfort than a factory owner in our country enjoys to-day. In our country he cannot buy a car, although he needs it badly to make his visits to customers and suppliers comfortable. In America almost all the workers have cars for their personal comfort.

I do not wish to say that only you are to be blamed for all this. We all have our share in it. In America the workers are as experienced in work as other employees and clerks in an organisation. Now it is our task to be as perfect as they are, or even more, otherwise, we cannot achieve remarkable prosperity. All of us must do our work in such a way as others, for whom we are doing, need it.

## ONLY UTILITY COUNTS

*How Thomas Bata looked upon his work and upon the people working with him, can be judged from this speech delivered on October 4th, 1919, in which he firstly found expression in the words "fellow-workers." It was to express his thanks for the greetings and congratulations on completion of his 25 years of enterprising work.*

Fellow Workers

I decided not to celebrate the Silver Jubilee of our work, because I knew that in our country are needed more and more

people, who would set an example of enthusiasm in work rather than in celebrations.

What touches me most is your simple but steady work, the progress of which is published in our weekly journal.

Your zeal and enthusiasm show that you comprehend my efforts and my work, and this is what gives me the greatest happiness, because all my work and efforts would be in vain if there was no understanding on your side. From this your understanding is built up enthusiasm, which does not know obstacles or fatigue. I am not proud of the work halls and the massive machines and that they all belong to me. I am proud of your ability, of your brave hearts, of your industrious arms, for it is only they that built the work which we see before us and only they form the foundation of the big future ahead of us.

In the prosperity of our common work assist also distant and near neighbours. They help us by schooling us and our children, who later find in our undertaking an institution of life, particularly the younger generation kin our understanding learn to value knowledge and adore honest and active work.

Our undertaking is the undertaking of workers. There is not a single born capitalist amongst us. Everyone of us extends freely the "Ladder of Success" to others because we divide among them our experiences.

This knowledge, which brings prosperity to our work, is spread like a stream over the length and breadth of our neighbourhood and constitutes the wealth of the people.

The biggest benefit, which our neighbours derive from us is the knowledge, and that the condition of abiding success in businessmen is to undertake only such business as would be of benefit to both the parties.

### **THE HEAT**

*But not only difficulties in organisation stand in the way which leads to the task. There is the old enemy with which Thomas Bata fights upto his death,—the unkind nature, luck of water. On 6th August, 1921, we find in his newspaper the following :*

The heat this season is becoming a terrible enemy of the people. The vegetables as well as cattle are dying; and in Russia, as the last alarming news shows, people are falling in crowds a prey to the severe blows of this deadly enemy.

Insufficiency of necessary articles for livelihood among the people are giving rise to many infectious diseases which are likely to spread in healthy districts also. Everybody feels the consequences of heat in his own place and knows how it results in general suffering and calamity.

The effects of this distressing condition in the present week in our own town are enumerated as follows :—

The watchman at night fell asleep. Fire broke out and destroyed a large part of our factory. Even the most courageous men were disheartened, and they were unable to fight this impediment although the prospects of a bigger output in that factory had given hopes of a bigger salary to the workers. This week, therefore, the output as also the workers' wages were five per cent lower, instead of rising by five per cent as estimated. The want of water and the height of temperature brought despondency to our people in the tannery, and created difficulties also for our power station and machinery workshops. Therefore, many of us find ourselves at continuous war with our common enemy—the heat.

We must take notice that we are conducting a war and we must come out victorious. Our salvation lies in this courageous work. It will increase our output as also our wages. It will make it possible to export our products beyond the borders of our state from where we will get fresh raw materials and chiefly foodstuff.

Good food, cleanliness and regular habits enable us to resist infection much more easily. This was best shown during the war. Those of us who had not signs of lung affection or heart trouble must have found their best on the war fronts, and we are still here safe from all sicknesses that ran riot in other

districts. It was all due to the better supply of foodstuffs. And the better foodstuffs were obtainable only through our diligent and active work.

Therefore, let us preserve our health and save ourselves from falling sick, because these are the first steps to our loss, first steps to death. Let us live the life !

## THE BAD TIMES

*It is the heavy winter of 1922. The first rush of inhabitants to the shops with industrial products is over. On the horizon are visible the first signs of financial storm—lowering the increment of exchange ratio, which began to shake every European state and also Czechoslovakia. Nobody knows the beginning and the course of that storm, nor how to stop it. This uncertainty we heard from Bata's speech on January 28th, 1922 :*

Due to the unfavourably fluctuating value of the Czech crown it is not possible to sell goods in western countries but with big losses, while in the east the consumption of our goods is not hopeful. Our shops here are full of excess goods like those in foreign countries. Nevertheless, we hope that the spring sun will come to our relief. Now, of course, we have to risk big losses as we did during the last spring and this autumn.

It will surely be difficult for the novices to understand how to sell shoes made of the best materials which weighs over one kilo for the price 119 crowns a pair in retail, which meant about 95 crowns in wholesale, if at that time one kilo of sole leather costs 100 crowns. He will understand it less when we will show him that in our undertaking last week people earned the highest salaries among the shoe manufacturers of our country.

The sale of perfect shoes at low prices with high wages to workers involves the economic problem which we sought to solve in our undertaking. But the prices at which we sold our goods were much below the production cost. We

underwent these sacrifices in order to get sufficient finances for keeping the production alive till the next spring season and for saving the employment of our workers.

*The difficulties multiply. Oppositions and criticisms from different corners pour in. How Bata faces them? See his article from June 3rd, 1922.*

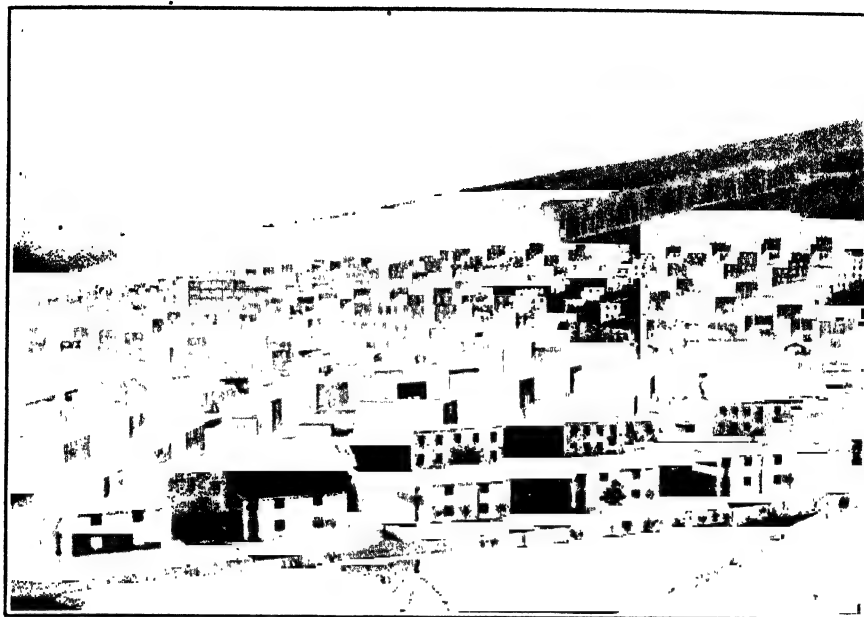
## LUNCH IN THE FACTORY

A certain newspaper, which calls itself a friend of the workers, has instigated the State Representative in Uherske Hradiste to take steps against me because, as it alleges, I press the workers to take their lunch in the factory's kitchen, and thus I am breaking, it says further, the family life of my employees.

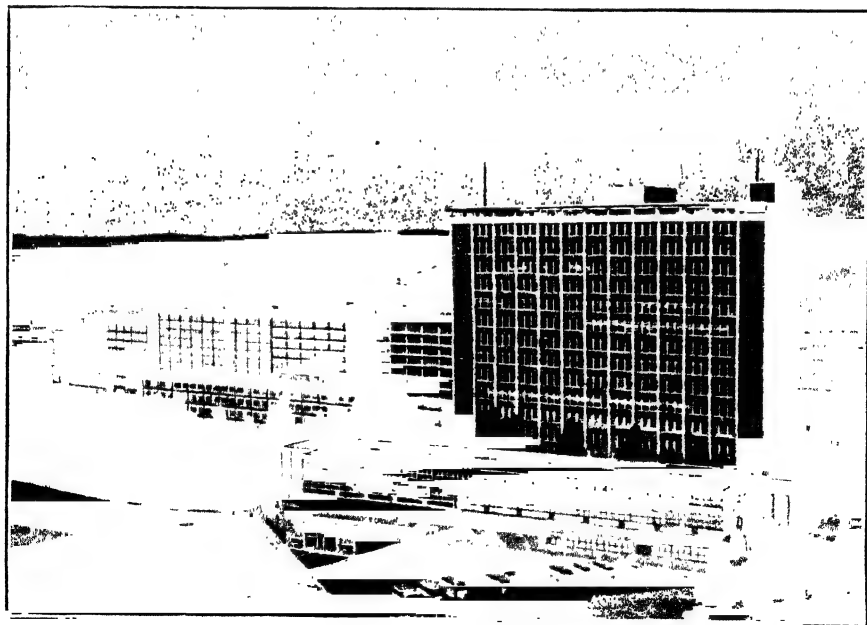
In proof of their allegations they say that a certain lady left her husband for the simple reason that he could not go home for lunch. If the State Representative had thought it necessary to ask me what was the truth, I would have given him the following reply :—

Our industry faces now a bad time. There are small earnings and big unemployment. The consumption of shoes in our small country is negligible, and provides jobs hardly for one-fifth of all the shoe factories, i.e., jobs for one-fifth of the people working there. The export has become slack due to high ratio of our currency. There is no demand for shoes from any country, because in every country there is surplus stocks. In every country by high tariff the home shoe industry prevents the import of foreign shoes. And in countries where there is no import duty, other countries are supplying their surplus stock of shoes, especially America which is invincible in the quality of shoes which so frequently become out of fashion there. There is always excess of such shoes in America, because fashions change there every four weeks.

Under such conditions people are sometimes obliged even to do the worst. Some of the Czechoslovakian manufacturers had to limit their production because of this reason



A panoramic view of one of the (living) colonies for Bata employees in Zlin.



The Administration building in Zlin, made of concrete and glass, it is the highest building in Europe.





The Labour Square in Zlin. In the background is the hotel "Společenský Dům".



Hundreds of thousands of Bata employees and their friends celebrate the traditional May Day in Zlin. This picture is taken from the May Day celebrations in the year 1937.

alone ; others stopped work altogether, and many, as a measure of relief to themselves, reduced the rates of their workers in order to have the possibilities of competing in foreign markets.

I tried to solve this deadlock by quite a different method. I said to my closest collaborators, about ten in number,—who are responsible directors and incharges,—that we must find a way out of this difficult situation, with a suggestion not to limit the production, nor to reduce the workers' wages.

It was clear to all of us that reduction in production cost must not be effected at the cost of the workers' wages. It must be saved in some other way. If the bold and generous people care, it is possible to save on regie, coal and on unnecessary expenditures in every part of the undertaking, and just as the fish begins to smell from the head, we should also start reorganisation from the head. Therefore, we were the first to give a start. We voluntarily renounced the lunch-time rest and began to take our lunch in the factory behind our working tables.

I am sure, I am not to be blamed for this, because in the law governing the welfare of workers, the person of employers is not included. Eight of my fellow-workers (excluding my brother) accepted the invitation to my table. They were convinced that he who himself is not ready to make personal sacrifices, which meant blessing for thousands of workers and their families, is not a leader of workers.

## WORK OR NOT TO WORK ?

*There are times when the fate of great enterprises are decided in a moment, when everything depends on putting the weight of activities on that part of scale which is decisive. But which is the right one? Bata was never a speculator, and his greatest and most courageous decisions were made in absolute certainty of future benefit, because he always based them on the much stronger certainty than what is called business acumen. He based his methods always on the customer direct; 'what is beneficial for him must be good for me and*

*also will raise me up'—that was the sense of Bata's conviction. To-day this truth is realised, but in 1922 it was the general belief that speculation was the only thing which kept business on and carried it to a successful end. At that time Bata's solution appeared to be absolute madness.*

*It is also necessary to point out that it was not only ideas which helped Bata to introduce radical changes in view of the economic conditions of the world after the war. It was also its sharp realisation.*

*And now comes the action. Either to stop the work and slowly perish, or continue and live. Bata decided to live, and finds the words, which spontaneously was received by his fellow-workers and customers on August 26th, 1922.*

## **TO THE FELLOW-WORKERS, WORK OR NOT TO WORK ?**

Our undertaking was the first which increased the salary and maintained it so long as the value of currency kept going down. The ratio of our money has been going up for the last two years, and we did not think of decreasing the wages until recently—hardly a few weeks ago.

The value of the Czech crown has gone up twice as much in foreign countries during the past weeks, a thing which nobody expected. Our Government took this unusual advantage of increasing the value of money as means of a benefit to our State. But this high ratio of our money completely removed the possibilities of export not only of shoes but of all other products of our State. At the moment we are selling shoes in foreign countries at half the original cost of production. The inland customers are waiting for their purchases until the prices go down. The farmer who comes to our shop says, "I sell my grain at half the usual price. I will never buy shoes unless I also get them at half the price."

We stand now on the cross-road and cannot say whether to stop production and dismiss all the employees, as many factories have already done, or to adapt the production cost to the new conditions.

For our undertaking, the former solution will be the most beneficial because we would be able somehow to sell our heavy stock of products made for the autumn season at a suitable price with the lowest possible loss, and wait for the purchase of the stock of material till the market of raw material conforms to the world price. But this course will surely lead to the destruction of the economic life of the people, particularly of the workers.

We decided to keep the production going, but to reduce the production cost to such an extent that will enable us to sell shoes on the average at half the spring prices.

This huge reduction in prices of shoes cannot be achieved only by saving money on *regie* and so it was necessary to extend this to salaries of officers and rates of workers by 40 per cent.

Side by side with this reduction we undertake to supply our workers with foodstuffs, clothes, washing and all other necessities of life at half the price demanded in the market in spring this year, and this arrangement will continue till the prices attain the same level throughout the market.

## TO OUR PUBLIC

*\*At the same time full page advertisements in the papers all over the country announced to the public :*

(Advertisement announcing the reduction)

To make possible for the inhabitants to purchase shoes for the autumn

To make unnecessary the journey to distant places in the continent for purchases

To keep the production in full swing

To create the possibility of carrying on without dismissing a single worker

To create the possibility of saving the State unemployment bonus

To build up a way for the general reduction of price-level

To help you all in overcoming completely this great economic crisis which has been due to the difference in the purchasing value of our currency at home as well as abroad

We reduce the prices of shoes from 1st September of this year by half on the average of this spring.

It is evident that we cannot afford this reduction by saving regie only, and so we are obliged to reduce the salaries of our workers by 40 per cent on the average. But for this forced action we shall guarantee to our employees the supply of all their necessities at half price from this May.

## **FRIENDS**

### ***A speech delivered in August 29th, 1922***

Your acceptance of our proposal for a 40 per cent reduction in wages proves that you fully understand my message sent to you from Prague and realise the situation with which our industry is faced due to the long strides taken by our crown from 10 to 20 centimes. The worst of it is that all the industries all over the Republic are placed in the same situation as ours. If the value of the Czech crown had gone up slowly by degrees, it would have been possible for our industry to follow its rise. But such rapid increase inflicts a severe blow to the existence of the export industry because this industry takes on itself all the losses until the time, when the Czech crown comes to a level when it will be possible to buy inland twice as much as it was a few weeks ago.

The life of an industry is not arranged in a way so as to close it down for some time and then revive it to be run as usual. With the decline of the export industry all our economic life might have been put into a difficult situation from which it would be hard to find a way out. If nothing is done at this moment that would soften the gravity of the situation, it may lead to wholesale failure of our economic life.

Thus the present crisis is not the crisis of our undertaking, it is the crisis of all States' economy. I am not in favour of sudden jumps of our currency, on the contrary I have been interceding from the very beginning for its stabilisation that will mean possibility of a calm development of the industry. A step, rather a stride, has already been taken by our currency. Moreover, the solution of the problem of currency depends on the statesmen, the people who are responsible for the administration of the State, while the duty of the industrialists is to conform to decisions in the measures of their possibilities because the first demand of the settlement of economic life of the inhabitants is the respect of law and the care of public interests.

It is not enough for us only to do something now that will make it possible to continue the work in our factory. We must do something outstanding that will make other things also go, namely our export industry, so that the economic life of our state may not be corrupted.

The glass-blower in the northern Czech country who pays 170 crowns for shoes cannot be satisfied with his salary when compared to the glass-blower in England where he can get a pair of shoes for 15 shillings only, i.e., 97 crowns now. If the glass factory stops the export to England, the glass-blower will lose his job, and will not buy our shoes even if we were to offer them at 97 crowns. And it will result in our State losing both on direct and indirect taxes as also the foreign currency that might increase the value of our crown.

To-day it is not sufficient only to shout for the state to reduce the porto, freight, taxes, etc. We all must reduce the prices of our products in order to smooth the difference between the purchasing values of our crown at home and abroad. Our undertaking will reduce the prices of shoes prevailing before the 12th of March of this year by half from 1st September, and will provide victuals, dresses and other necessities of life to the employees at half price. Against this security our

undertaking required of its workers to accept a reduction of 40 per cent in their wages.

Thus our undertaking will be in a more difficult position than any other factory in the republic. The reduction will swallow half of our property, and our debts will not be reduced. It is an open secret that our undertaking owes only to its workers and officers on the deposits in the Factory's bank, 5.9 million crowns, which are annually interested. This of course is not the only debt of our factory. For the payment of interest of these debts we must sell twice as much of our products as we did up till now.

I decided upon this step as I did not see any other solution of this problem. Thus the industry, firstly ours, will work for the time being with great deficit and at the same time face difficulties in providing necessities of life to its workers and selling the products. But I hope that the increased production will soon convert these losses into profits.

This transfer of loss from the customer and worker to the industrialist will be of course distasteful to many because it will involve great loss to the industrialist and demand great personal efforts on the side of the industrialist. To overcome these difficulties it will not be enough for the enterpriser to resort to eight-hour working days only. I think, twice as much work a day will not be sufficient for him, as any great crisis cannot be overcome by small work, or small mental and physical pains.

As long as we continue to sacrifice, we will have the right to demand from the Government to bring the same sacrifice in its undertakings (posts, railways) and finally to settle the question of stabilizing our currency. The present rise in the value of the crown is chiefly on account of loss to enterprisers and will serve to satisfy only the banks and those who save money. The value of the Czech crown was increased four times during the year, from 5 to 20 centimes which went to benefit the capitalists and the banks. It is just the time that

a definite adjustment of value should be immediately made. This will ensure those who save money the possibility to save money. It might be the gold centred way and the end of break-neck jumps, about which we never know if once it will not break our back-bone.

## THE ROAD FOR BETTERMENT

From Prague comes the news how our example is being delightfully followed by others. In the first instance, the Prague's shoe stores have announced that they are bringing down their prices to the same level as ours.

The Iron works announced the reduction of 30-100 crowns on one ton which is about thirty per cent. This big reduction will help the consumer not to turn away from using iron there, where previously it was used with big utility. Our undertaking was also in many parts forced to use wood in place where iron could give much better service, and it was only because the price of iron was too high. Thus for instance, in our Loucka farm we made 1 kilometre extension of aqueduct for which we used wooden tubes instead of iron tubes. We had calculated that the wooden tubes would cost us half the price which we must have to pay on the interest from the sum which the iron tubes cost, although the wooden tubes lasts only for ten years.

And thus the consumer must have been doing without iron or at least limiting it to most important requirements. And the same attitude existed towards all other goods and products. We do not hear mothers complain that their children had too many shoes, dresses and numerous other things of which they do not know what to do. On the contrary, we see that there is want and scarcity on all sides, and we cannot comprehend as to how it is possible to limit production and dismiss workers at such a critical moment and how to arrange things so as to be able to supply goods at a price which will be convenient for all to pay.



It will be impossible to see barefooted children insufficiently dressed in the winter months but we will see the workers driving into the workshops in their own cars which now only a few industrialists might do.

*And now follows the time during the year 1922, which is stingy on expressions of common style, but rich on ideas, which are expressed in home organisational arrangements. Bata finds the way how to keep even for the future the prices at low level and how to fulfil his promise to his employees that their wages would many times rise up. "Sing bird, or die!" was his motto at that time.*

*Thus in the roar of fights and sufferings in which were reflected the sufferings and economic struggles of all humanity, Thomas Bata finds the way and solution in the self-management of workshops.*

## **WORKING CONTEST**

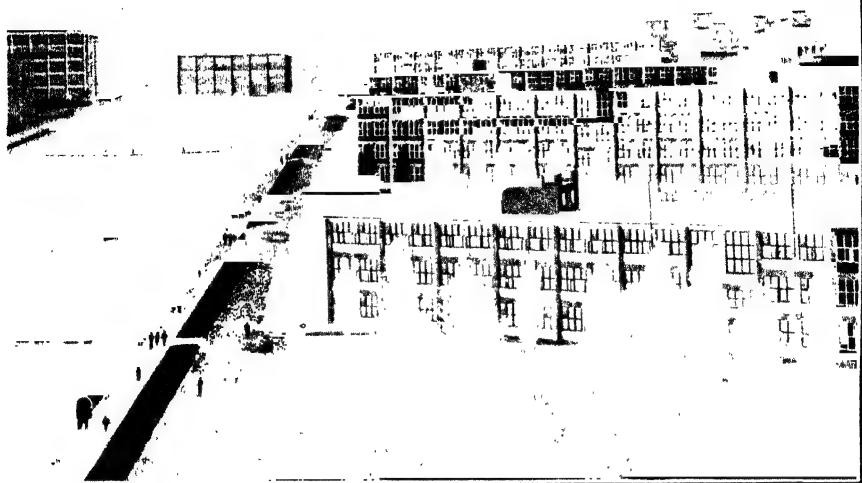
***Speech delivered in Sept. 1922***

Emulation in work is sublime. Those of you are better men who in the contest of work is defeated those who wilfully did not take part in it. All the good properties have been built up by contest. Our working contest aims not only at accelerating the action of the worker but also in a greater measure in increasing his income and, therefore, his property.

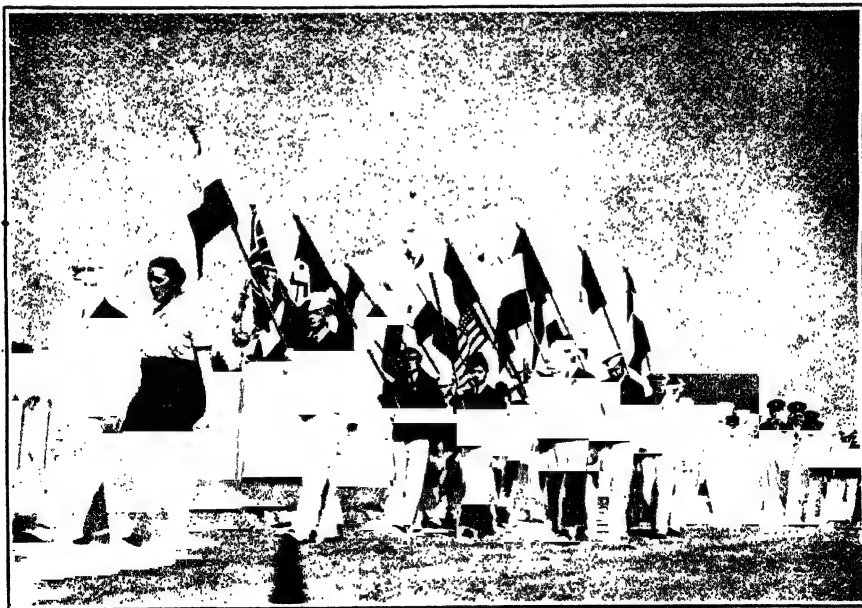
To me it is a problem—how to make it possible to sell shoes cheap in the same way as it is done in America. And this can be achieved only when the average of the production of shoes in the factory per worker will be the same as in America. For this there must be good machinery, good organisation and judicious use of time on the part of the workers.

Good use of time is possible only when the worker has a conviction that he will be the first to be benefitted and only when he works as if he were engaged in his own undertaking.

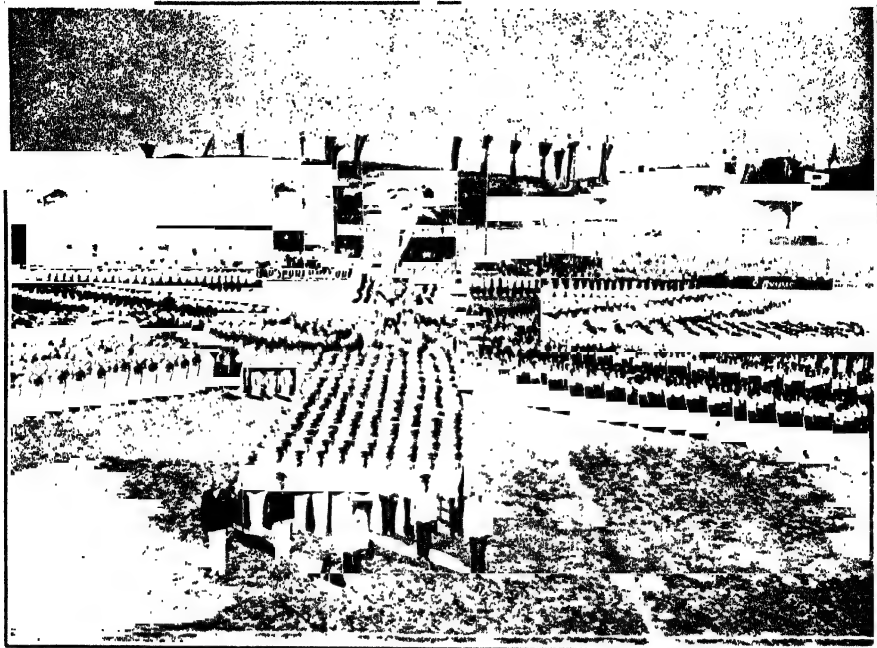
There is a principle in our undertaking not to decrease the rates when the workers increase their quantity of work. As a rule we allow our workers to be benefitted by increased production.



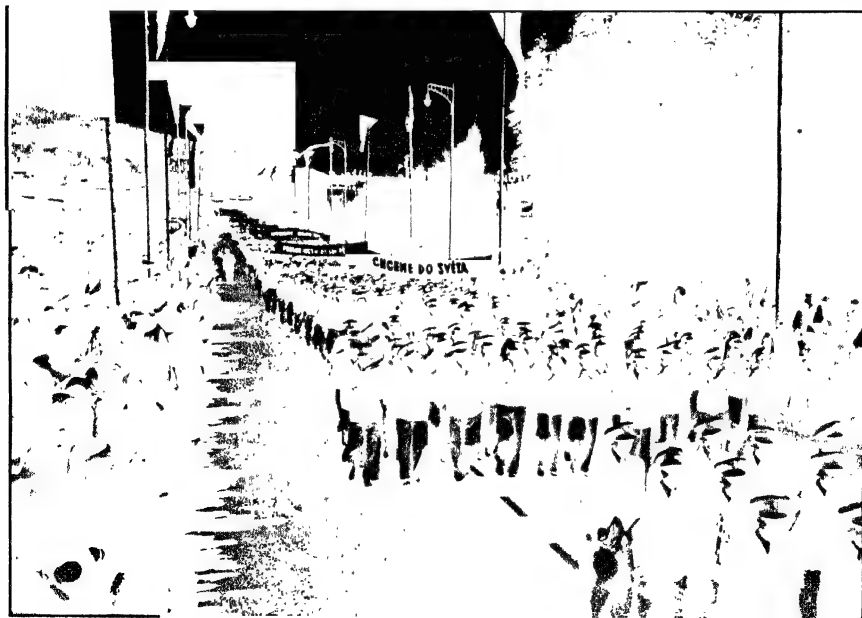
The buildings of the Bata's world-famous schools of work for young men and women. Before the war, young men of not less than sixteen nations were getting their practical and theoretical education there.



The Bata's young men—representatives of different nations carrying their national flags in the sports festival of the Bata schools.



Picture from the sports festival of the Bata schools in Zlin.



Bata's young men in their uniforms in procession.

When there is such increased production, the undertaking saves the regie but later this benefit passes on to the consumers in the form of reduced prices, which makes it possible for us to continue manufacture.

*But there are not only enthusiastic followers; there are also smaller or bigger opponents—those who directly suffer by this change of standpoint towards the customers and employees. They began a struggle. How and by what? By that which in the business world is most sensitive—by slanders. How Bata defends? Read his manifesto on December 23rd, 1922 :*

### **BANKRUPT ?**

I am not a speaker or a writer nor was it required of me up till now. To our workers it was enough to get the highest wages, and the first and the foremost demand of our customers was to be supplied with good and cheap shoes. I was recently surrounded by workers who were afraid of losing their work as well as their savings, while the customers looked into the shoes, and ceaselessly thought if the money saved by them on the purchase (due to reduction in prices) was responsible for that calamity which is being circulated by our competitors and to which publicity is being given by some newspapers.

I must tell the truth to my workers as well as to my customers, for I want them to believe me also in future. Our slanderers were not telling the truth when they wrote about my opulence nor are they telling the truth now when they are writing of my bankruptcy.

I have no opulence. I have only shoes for customers and leather for workers. It is an asset as the telescope is to the astronomer or the violin to the musician. If I had not my telescope and violin I could not have given work to my workers or shoes to the customers. My case would have been then like the musician without his instrument.

Bankrupt I have never been, nor ever I will be. That I am not a bankrupt you can easily guess. You know that a bankrupt

looks upon his creditor for reduction on credit, and the latter will never allow any if the former denies his bankruptcy.

It is rather difficult to convince you that I will never be a bankrupt. But why? Firstly, I come of the old school of thought whose people considered bankruptcy a disgraceful act, particularly when the bankrupt made his own gains at the loss of his creditor. Secondly, I learnt when I was a young lad how to defeat bankruptcy. I will tell you how, for I think you may derive some lessons from it.

When I was a youngman of 18, I joined my brother and sister in the foundation of our industry with a capital of 800 zlati (Rs. 600). We felt ourselves rich spending time and money, but after a year we had no money to pay the bills for the goods supplied to us. The unexecuted decree showed that we had nothing to our credit and the account books showed many items—unpaid drafts to name one—on the debit side. At that critical moment of our business my elder brother was called to serve in the army for a period of 3 years.

The debt on the balance sheet does not mean bankruptcy, yet for on the credit side there is no mention of the energy, the working capacity and the knowledge of the businessman which is a great activum. But at the time I had not even this credit. I was educated in a town of clerks where the ideal of every individual's life was to be employed in an office. Upon manual work I looked down with contempt, and of any other work I had no knowledge. But even then I did not become a bankrupt. The apprehensions of bankruptcy of a brother's undertaking in which I myself had a share of responsibility not only gave me a warning but impelled me to work and save money and time. Thus I defeated bankruptcy by my own work and paid my creditors in full. This begot in me the conviction that bankruptcy is a question of moral viewpoint. Calamity is also the cause of bankruptcy, and at the same time there are bankrupts who do not wish to survive their disgrace. But such people are no guarantee to creditors. Their guarantee is only that man who is ready to give away not only property

to his creditors but also offer himself for work till he is even completely exhausted.

Only on such virtues stand big undertakings, big banks, big nations.

By this I don't want to turn you away from taking money from your personal savings in our undertaking. I want only to tell you not to save your money in the marvellous palaces, but firstly to take a good look to see how high is the moral value of the people working inside.

*The faith and respect for work is ripened in Bata's notion as the most noble expression of human personality, because he had seen how common and honoured work cure the injuries brought about by war to the people and how the whole district rises up. He writes about it to his fellow-workers on July 14th, 1923 :*

## THE HOLIDAYS

The last week had the burden of two holidays, one religious and the other national. Our work did not cease during any of these holidays notwithstanding the fact that there was not much work and that the products went to the stock-room. By working during holidays we do not mean that we have less regard for our saints and national heroes than other people. Our conviction is that by honest work we cannot and do not dishonour, desecrate or insult a national hero or a holy personage.

The strength and prosperity of a nation depend on the work of its citizens. This we can see best when we compare the life in America to that in Turkey, I mean Turkey before Kemal Ataturk. The Americans do not celebrate anything by "doing nothing", even on their greatest hero, Washington, although he is always present in the hearts of all Americans. In Turkey people have three holidays a week, Muslims on Friday, Jews on Saturday and Christians on Sunday. This renders it impossible to work on these three days, because always some part of the people are celebrating their holidays and consequently absent from their work.

That America is closer to us than Turkey is evident from the fact that our people go over to the former country to earn their living but never to the latter. But the most beneficial course to our people is to have the possibility of their earning at home, and this can be achieved only when our people will follow in many things the example of America, particularly the diligence of the American citizens.

This should be notified to those people on whom depends everything that the holidays should be transferred to Sundays, and also to those who agitate for new holidays, that the more the holidays there will be more emigrants from our country—mainly our best people.

The decision arrived at by us regarding the two holidays met with the full satisfaction of our workers. The workers who have worked on those holidays have added to their wages 142,516 crowns by which they would have been otherwise poorer if we had decided to enjoy the holidays. And moreover the expenditure of the workers would have increased, as they would spend as much as possible to celebrate the festivities.

## **SHARE OF THE WORKERS ON WORKSHOP RESULTS**

*To the employees of 3rd storey, 4th building on April, 11th 1924.*

We offer you a share on the results of your department not that we feel the necessity to spend money somehow among the people.

We want with the help of this arrangement to reduce further the production cost of our goods. We want to reach the task of producing even more cheaper shoes with the increased income of our workers. We think that our products are still expensive and the workers' salary too low.

Therefore, we will give you a share of the results which are reached in the workshop where you are working. The independent working departments are not big and

therefore every one of you can help to increase the profit of your workshop, never mind if other departments are working at a loss. The accounting system is so simple that everyone of you can easily understand it. The loss and profit account with all details will be hung up on the black-board of your workshop every week. If some week your department will have a loss, you will not be affected, because you will have no share on the loss.

In every department at the present moment almost double the number of people than is necessary for the quantity of shoes produced are working. You can increase your income according to your salary as well as from the share on the result, if everyone will make use of all his spiritual and physical ability for work. Your present losses depend on you because you think of your work only for your sake and your own benefit, and don't care sufficiently if you do your work in such a way that other workers can continue on without difficulties. The share of the profits, which will be given to you, should remove this evil so much so that it will create your interest on the high income from the quick and perfect work of the whole department with the most possible saving on material.

Don't be afraid that you will loose your work, if the output of the workers will be increased. We have in our programme to produce ten times more than we are doing now to partly fill up the demand for shoes. But these three things are still our impediments :—

1. Deficiency of wise and liberal people who can take responsible position in the newly created workshops
2. Deficiency of dexterous workers; and
3. Lack of money.

All these three impediments we can remove by steady work.

By the share on the result we want to elevate the workers substantially as well as morally. The worker should understand our business; he should have a feeling for it and grow up side by side with it. We wish to make all our workers



shareholders of our undertaking. We can accept the personal saving of our workers upto Kc. 10,000—on 10 per cent interest, and over this sum on the interest according to the agreement.

This agreement can be cancelled any moment by both the parties.

We wish every employee working with us to make of himself a foreman and a departmental manager. His dealing and behaviour should be such that we can at any moment give him a chance. We demand on you to spend your increased income to the betterment of life's position of yours and your families and for your education. Only thus we can hope that the money spent will come back to the undertaking in your increased abilities; never mind if these abilities will be seen in your work for our undertaking or in work in the public life of our state.

For the time being we start the system of shares for the workers only in a few departments, which are so organised that by their product they will be able to complete the demands of the world market. We hope that by this summer it will be possible for us to organise gradually all our departments in such a way that we can give all of them the benefit of the share on the results.

We do not offer the share to people who have not been working with us for at least one year and to those who are less than 20 years of age. But the young workers can get shares if they prove that on their income their relatives are also living. The share can be refused after consideration to single people as well as to the departments by us.

I am sure that this income from the share of your department will increase heavily your income, of course, if this arrangement will find in you such understanding as I explained and as we surely expect.

## **SELF-MANAGEMENT OF WORKSHOP**

### ***Opulence—Obligation—Poverty—Excuse***

One morning I woke up with a joyful song. It was a happy morning, which followed the evening on which I had finished

the work; the thought as to how to make the workshops self-governing by allowing the employees a share on the departmental result.

To offer a share to the employees on the result is not, after all, a new idea. It has found favour with American industrialists and businessmen. They give to their employees share on the year's results achieved by the undertaking.

This is also a beneficial arrangement for the workers as well as for the employers, if it is made voluntarily without the interference of law. In this way is built up confidence between both the parties.

But I was searching for such a share holding system for the employees in the results by which it would be possible to build up the self-governing of the workshops should it have the following conditions:—

1. Closing accounting statements in the shortest possible time i.e., weekly
2. Possibility of every shareholder of calculating the shares himself
3. Making the statement of share possible even in small departments to enable every employee to take part in the management of the workshops.

The present profit sharing system was introduced into most of our workshops satisfying all these demands. But even at this, the estimated tasks have not been reached yet. We pay every year a considerable sum as share on the departmental results but material benefit to the undertaking which we expected, we still could not get.

It could not be reached, because we imagined this matter to be easier than it was in reality.

In the self-governing of the workshops it is not sufficient to create interest among the people for the good management of those departments, nor the people's knowledge is sufficient that when everybody works properly paying heed to time and quality they will have a good share. No

doubt everybody wants a good share but people hardly know what they should do for the betterment of the management of the workshop and very few people are able or willing to do that.

During the two and a half years our work and the self-governing of the workshops considerably improved, the profit of our undertaking and the wages of the employees increased, and the prices of our products were reduced although the prices of raw materials went higher.

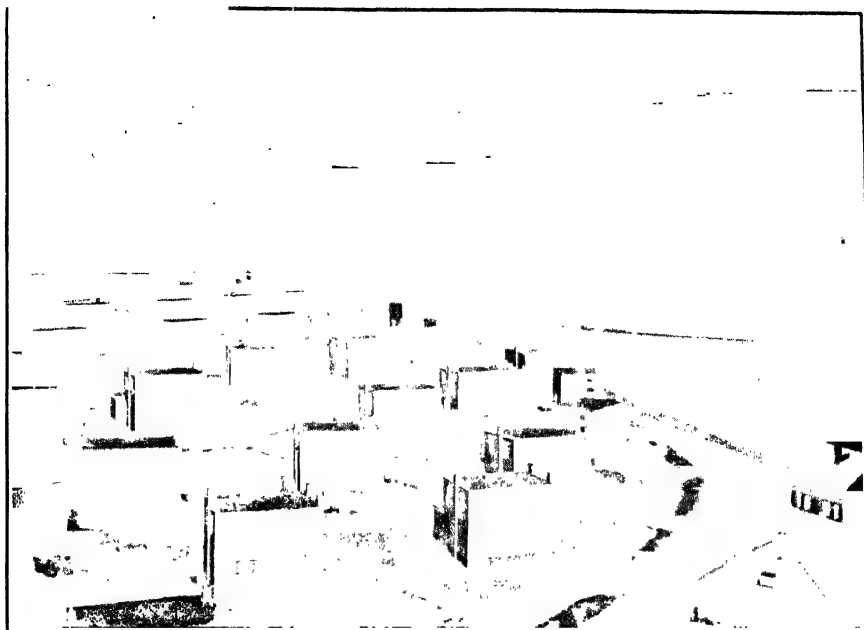
What part this progress the employees' profitsharing system has taken? It can't be expressed in figures but I think it has been something more than we can guess. Ten years time we needed to found our production and accounting organization which opened to us the way to progress. We should not be impatient or despondent when in the early beginning we failed to reach the goal.

We can achieve success in the right direction if we can teach the people how to manage their works. It will be easier and they will derive more benefit from it. Hitherto experience has shown that it is more difficult to teach people to think independently than listen obediently. From this it is clear that we know how to achieve the second accomplishment but so far as the first one is concerned our progress has been rather slow.

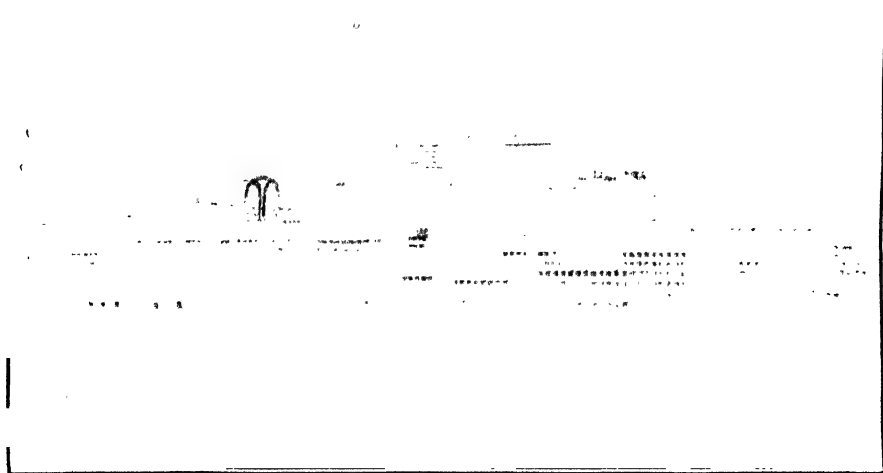
Let us not by mistake agree with those who assert that most people are working because of fear of starvation. There are undoubtedly such people, but very few of them are amongst us. Such people may go out of our undertaking. We don't require them as they don't require us.

The self-governing of the workshops is not only less expensive but also better. Being personally engaged in my work nobody knows as well as myself what are the impediments in it.

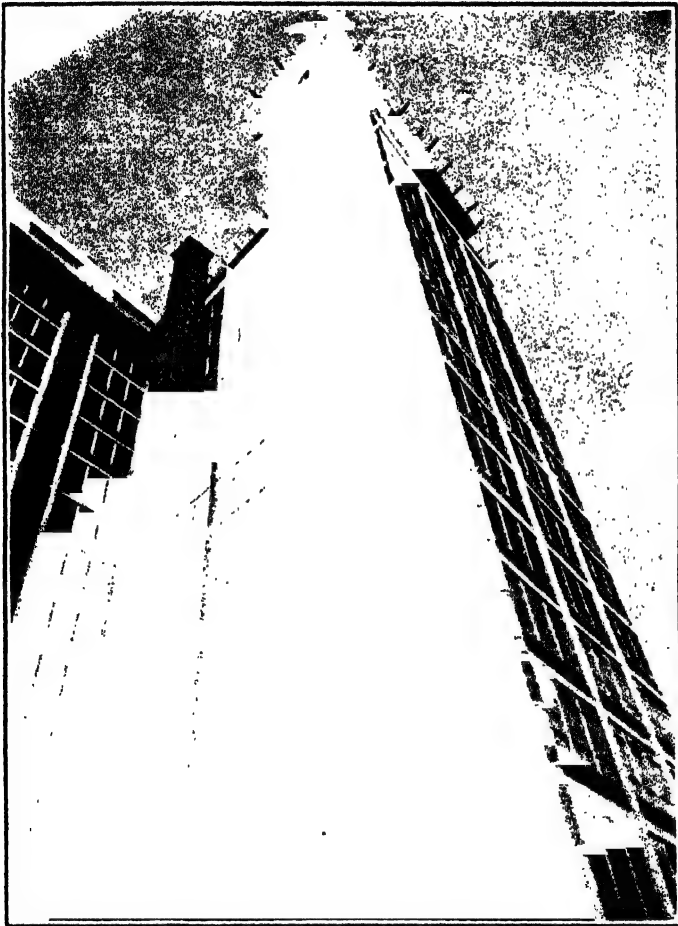
Even a most careful chief sometimes commits errors and leaves his office with some unfinished work. The self-governing



Picture of another part of the Bata (living) colonies in Zlin.



The Zlin—social centre by night.



**A profile of the Administration building in Zlin.**

system of the workshops will be a success equal to our foresight in the right selection of the employee.

The man who is punished by his manager to pay compensation for his bad work, will be more inclined to grumble and regard it as an injustice than when the same fine is imposed by his colleagues and fellow-workers in the workshop as all of them have to suffer because of his bad work. Work is mostly bad in places where good work fails to win confidence and esteem.

A share in the departmental result enables all our employees in improving their establishment and condition. From the time a big number of our employees started withdrawing deposited money we see how much lighter the management of the undertaking has become. We must be able to distinguish those who value that money from such people who are waiting for the day when they will get money to squander away.

Such people should not be among us. They will never join us earnestly in solving the economical questions because they take little interest even in their own affairs.

We are aware that in this direction we have made no appreciable progress. We know that the savings of our employees had doubled during the last year only in our undertaking, and we know also that in some of our city banks the savings of our employees went several times higher. But this information is about our employees as a whole and our knowledge of individuals is still very little.

The employer who teaches people how to earn money, teaches only one-third of what is necessary for them to know in becoming economically independent. The rest two-thirds consists in reasonable spending and the remaining in saving.

### ORGANISER III

*It was very few people who had a right impression of how Bata, the organizer, reached his magnificent business—productional and*

organizational—successes. Looking only upon results which were surprising by their accuracy and completion, they thought that behind those success stands only a great mathematician and operator who measures and calculates in advance every step and accordingly directs in every step all those who realise his plans. But nothing is more far from the truth than this picture of Bata.

In the personality of Thomas Bata, the organiser, the artist triumphed over the scientist. His engineering keenness was in service to the philosophical side of his spirit—he was a poet of realistic visions.

Therefore, each of his organizational art began with the human and ends human. The great expert of human spirit and with the appraiser of human abilities, he was conscious of the strength of his personality and the influence it had over other people and used it to create and increase the personal abilities of everyone who came in touch with him. He tried to develop those qualities of all his men which lie hidden in a smaller or greater quantity which, backed by human nature, responds spontaneously. Strong minded as he was he did not divide his life in days and periods of work, enjoyment, education, he looks also at every problem of human life from childhood to old age—strongly, calmly and from one standpoint. Therefore, in his expressions there are some which at the first sight seem to have nothing in common with the production of shoes and the business and which take one aback by their simplicity. In general, all the changes in views on economical organization and mutual relationship of people working in modern industry, as is Bata, are so simple that everyone can understand them. And just simple and for everyone understandable solutions. Thomas Bata always was looking for.

## THE FOUNDATION OF SELF-GOVERNMENT OF WORK

I am sure that those workshops whose people have savings and whose people are living in good economical relations, will work much more peacefully and there will be

much higher wages on the same rates and the same kind of work; and that in those workshops we can reach the self-governing system without much difficulties.

For many years it is known to us that the employee was for us almost without value so long as we did not succeed to bring his life on the way of economic betterment. We know how wise is the principle to give the responsibility of important business transactions only to those people who have more than they need.

It is not possible to foresee in man how he would preserve other's money in the midst of temptations and also possess those luxuries and comforts that other people have, by saving his own money and property.

We know how our sales department with all the shops would be like if we did not find the way how to make capitalists from our shopmanagers.

And those shops—hundreds of miles away from the centre—have absolute self-government. They show us clearly the way leading to the self-government of our workshops.

In the search for an acceptable organising system for those branch-lines we spend, of course, much more diligence and time than to self-governing of workshops, because existence of those shops otherwise would not be possible. Impossibility of personal contact and control from the side of the management for their distance, required a system to be invented which would always work smoothly, which would never make disturbances.

The smooth running of all our branches prove that the rules by which they are managed are right. The irregularity against undertaking and against customers are shut out and if somewhere still existing, they are effected only in such shops the managers of which are unaware of the possibilities that



honest work is the shortest way to gain property, and in those who were still not able to educate themselves in the economical self-discipline without which the property cannot be earned or maintained.

If the workshop manager will not have this right economical view it cannot be expected from him that he will implant the right standpoint into his people. And the manager will get this view if he proves himself that this recommended way is passable and will lead to success and property.

To help the manager to gain property by presents has no meaning at all. It can go quickly and easily. For that can be sufficient to give him so much and so much money for the beginning. By gifts we may go just the opposite way. Such a man to lean upon gifts and not upon himself and his knowledge. Here goes about the moral question, about education and creating of self-confidence and self-discipline.

The most of opulent, economically self-disciplined people will bring to every undertaking great swing ups. This can be judged by those who daily try to find out—in and also outside our undertaking—the people fit and ready to do some work on the other part of the globe.

Usually the people who have ambition have not that vital quality—sense of economy. It shows that they never know how to save or keep even the smallest part of the sum which should be given to their hands in foreign lands.

Of course, for such work the man whose expenses are limited only because of empty pockets is not fit too.

The undertaking must stand as a good example of the model economist. It must preserve strict orders in its monetary transactions. It must not work with strange capital and must not take for enterprising the savings of the employees in the factory bank.

Every one of us must know and see that the undertaking has technical possibilities—every moment to pay every saving—to the employees.

Our undertaking is managed strictly according to this principle. We do not owe to any bank and to our suppliers we pay immediately after taking the goods. The sum which we owe to our employees is kept in our factory bank, the smaller parts being immediately payable and the bigger parts kept in the reliable banks.

## **THE IMPEDES OF SELF-GOVERNING OF WORKSHOP**

The biggest impediments let us signal out with our small minds. Those will create the obstacle bigger, whose positions are less important. They will be scared by the danger that they can be replaced. The desire of the man to be irreplaceable is the lever of progress, but the obstacle to progress is our desire to remain just irreplaceable.

The incapable director jealously looks round himself to remove anyone who can grow up over his head. The able director is on the contrary full of work. He will be requiring and educating people who might be able to do his work, because scarcely he learns it himself, he would see that his person is needed one step higher so that his work down may be rightly done. He does not care if on the door of the Chief Director is written "Entrance Prohibited." He enters, politely greets the Chief Director and lets him know that he does not care about his chair, that he comes to do his work only.

We can be less jealous, less anxious about our present position if we comprehend that work which yields a scanty living is demanded by millions of people, but work which pays hundred times more, is sought energetically by the people and by many frequently in vain.

The view rooted in many people will be gravely harmful to us as in this world there is place only for a small

quantity of opulent people. This view was taken up by the peasantry of which we all are descendants.

The conception of opulence in the peasants is based on the quantity of land, and quantity of land in this world is limited.

In industry it is different. We know, specially about our undertaking, that the more people are working in it the better for us.

We must take note that it is for the prosperity of the undertaking that everyone of our employees should become more opulent day by day. It is as important as taking care of oiling our machines.

We must notify that a man without reserves to stand by is put into such irregularities, as machine without oil and without spare parts and is in the workshop just as much useless.

## **EDUCATION FOR WELL-BEING**

A workshop working economically and perfectly should be regarded as a household and the foreman its head. The workers should, therefore, live in close relationship with each other like the members of a big family, and the spirit of co-operation and mutual help should exist among them not only in the workshop but also beyond the enclosures of the factory. Any mishap to the members of the workshops should be regarded by the manager as a mishap to himself and to the entire work.

This education of the people in the interest of their own well-being by the help of self-discipline, will be best created among the young lads in whom are not yet rooted the passions which absorb big portions of income and energy, like drinking, smoking, etc.

Here we give a right start to the education of young men. Our 14-year old boys must be absolutely economically free much earlier and should be independent before the burden of family life with all its responsibilities falls upon their shoulders.

In addition to physical fitness and practical knowledge of things which are necessary for his career in life, we must take care that every youth, by the time he reaches his 24th year, has amassed some capital.

This saving can be reached if their working possibilities and earning capacities grow better year after year than they do now. And we believe that it will be much better than we can think of at this stage.

The interest which our undertaking pays to all the employees, form one-third of the capital saved.

The same amount of care we must take in the education of girls. But the education of girls will have other tendencies. We must improve our schools for cooking, because cooking now-a-days is a science, which keeps and preserves the health, and ignorance in cooking on the contrary destroys health. We must give to them more possibilities to learn to sew dresses, clothes, the care and education of children, and management of the household. Men cannot imagine even now how far the spirit of a well-educated and reasonable woman by her creative wisdom in apparently small things can make life pleasant.

Girls cannot be possibly taught to reach as high a standard of saving as boys, because girls have less earning capacity but bigger demand on their clothing. But despite this they should be an eager demand for brides for our young men because of their practical education, morality and society education, as well as from the financial standpoint.

Two young people who bring into matrimony the abilities of work and earnings and have become habituated in reasonable spending after ten years of experience of independent economising, with their joint savings of a considerable amount, will be able to establish a family with a solid economical foundation for the future. They will be capitalists, because their individual savings will be an encouraging foundation. The interest they will get for their capital is

sufficient for the most necessary expenditures of the family. They will be masters and not slaves of capital. This is the most natural solution of the question of population of the industrial employees.

Many people will think : What will the world do with so much money if everyone of us become capitalists? Who will pay interest if everybody wanted to take it ?

Those solitudes are useless. If we worked diligently for the whole week for gaining capital, one minute in a week is sufficient for finding out possibilities. Attractive things are shouting : "To us, to us, to us,"—we will do well to guard ourselves and keep all those numerous brawlers at a safe distance.

## PARENTS AND THE CHILDREN

Another solemn obstruction in the economical training of our young employees are their parents.

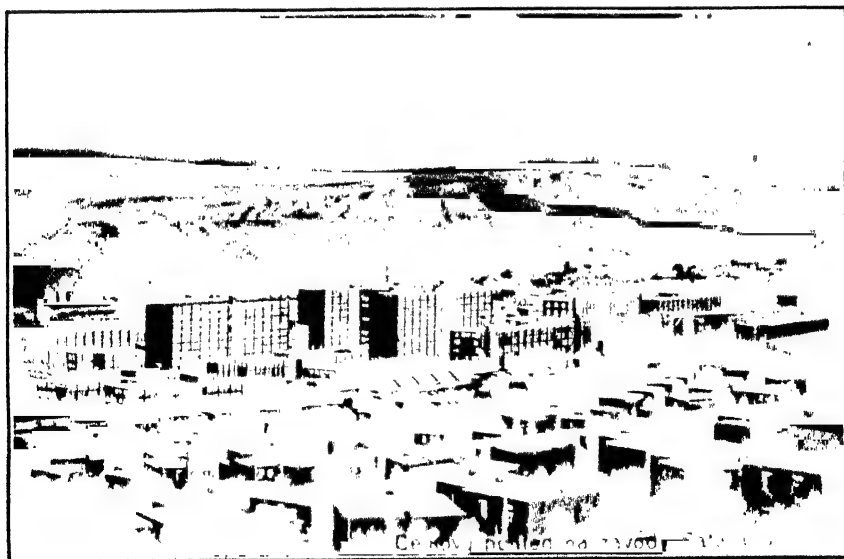
Many parents think that they have full right to manage the earnings of their children. Son or daughter must hand over his or her salary to the mother or father, and they do with it whatever they like—purchase food, clothes, make repairs of their house, etc.

In good families the daughter or son have not the courage to demand to see the accounts because of the apprehension that mother or father will think of such demand as distrust or as ingratitude to the parents. In less good families the father, sometimes also the mother, makes less effort for work and earning money when their children start work and earning.

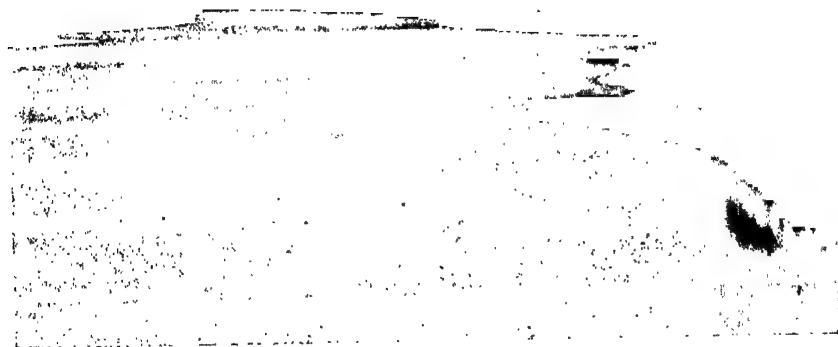
A father can be very often heard to say in the tavern with a full glass, "What use has a smith for the pincers ?"—and just himself replies : "May be because of not getting his hand burnt." And, therefore, we can see very often a man before his marriage, after ten years of work, does not know if he has any property or not. But certainly he has not any experience about the independent management of the economic side of his life. We can find out that he has got no idea about real life and does not even know the cost of the clothes he wears,



The village of Zlín in 1894, the year in which Thomas Bata was born



The same Zlín in 1932—the year of the death of its builder. Picture shows only the western part of the town



This was Batanagar in 1932, when Thomas Bata came to India. On the 28th October, 1934 was laid here the foundation-stone for building up a model industrial town.



because it was bought by his mother. He has such unblissful feelings that he is grudged by others, even by those of his close relatives, and surely he has no pleasure from his economical results and progress, and thus no pleasure from his work.

It is the sacred duty of the older children to help the parents in the rearing up and education of younger children, especially if the earning of the parents is not sufficient. But in such cases the parents should accept money from their children only as a loan to the family so that the burden can be divided equally amongst all children.

Parents should always let their children from early childhood decide independently on all their earnings. Of course, they should carefully watch all their spendings. Even a child of six years has a full right to be the owner of the money which he acquired by work and has the right to administer his little possession even if it consists of only a few coins.

Let us get rid of our littleness and greatness will find us easily.

## **BUSINESS AND CONFIDENCE**

Let us do only such work which serves the public.

Business is in reality service to the people. The more businessmen will understand this truth, the more will be increased the circle of people who would like to be in business connection with them.

Often I used to stand on the cross-road not knowing whether to go to the right or to the left, I think that in the end I always gained the most when I decided to take such a course which seemed to be beneficial for the public only.

The direction, which in the beginning seemed to bring benefit only to me, at the end brought only harm for both of us—for me, as well as for the public. Success in business is founded on the victories over our weaknesses. The enemy of our success in business is mostly in us.



The shoe industry brings to the producer much losses in the cutting of pieces from leather. As you know, leather is a natural product and there is none which may be exactly the same as the other—each is different. But in leather even every small part has different qualities and also in every part the shoe needs the difference in quality of material.

By negligence the cutter might cut out of a large and good quality leather only small pieces for small and ordinary shoes yet by careful work the opposite result can be reached. From the smaller and poorer quality leather might be cut out more and even better pieces for shoes.

When we learn the extent of losses created by the bad cutting of leather, we find out that progress can be possible only if we minimise those losses.

The minimising can be possible only with the help of cutters. It is necessary to make businessmen of the workers and friends of our work and to teach them quickly how to calculate. This work, calculations, which up till now is made only by the chief and a few of his assistants within closed doors must be made by every cutter, must be open to everyone.

The calculations which so far have been carefully closed in iron safes have got to be put into the hands of all foremen and cutters.

Thus the business secrets of the big company were thrown on the road, given to the competitor's hands—those competitors, who watched each of our moves and imitated each of our doings.

It was long before the apprehensions of our faithful workers arising out of this new arrangement vanished. And it was also the same when we threw out from the impregnable safe the balance sheet of different departments and of the whole factory. It has shown us that these things are unmissable for the people, who are responsible for those different

departments. It showed us that they cannot work with complete success if they do not know about all the happenings and results of their respective departments.

There was also the bugbear. In this case it takes the mask of the tax-collector. And the newspapers of all parties and languages took great pains to create in us even bigger horror. Every tradesman knew exactly that up till now every business succumbed to the impossibly high taxes.

We had such an indirect feeling at that time that business was alive only to those who defrauded the tax-collectors. About the tax laws and their practice we knew nothing.

When we succeeded in the smashing away of this inherited and instilled instinct, we covered half the way to victory.

It was a few years before the war, when we let the tax-officer explain to us every detail about the tax laws and we really surprised him by giving him the books and details for calculation of our taxes.

By this way we gained a strong and right ground for our undertaking. It saved us especially at a time when the tax-pay situation was really acute.

The biggest benefit of this purification was that now we were able to show to everybody all our work in the full blaze of daylight, and that people might know every one of our moves. Thus was removed one great reason to keep in the chief's impregnable safe all that was necessary for fellow-workers for their daily work.

How malicious can people become in this respect I found in one tannery, the head of which had the knowledge and possibilities for success but lacked the knowledge of perfect industrial accounting, which was necessary for him and his

undertaking. He became furious when he came to know that if he were to introduce into his business the perfect accounting then he would have to keep his accounts open for every one of his fellow-workers. He was shocked that the assistants would know every detail of the chief's personal expenditures. He said that he would not start such kind of accounting, that his own personal expenses he was not showing even to his wife, and furiously ran away.

## PUBLIC ACCOUNTING

*There was another big difficulty that prevented the making of the chief's accounting secrets public. It was the fear of the people's demands. The most convenient way of refusing legitimate as well as illegitimate demands of the employees was found by the chiefs in his reply: "Sorry, I cannot do so. It is not profitable. We are losing." For all this it was necessary to look into old things, and find out new plans the basis of which should be truth.*

It was necessary to find out for all times the hearts willing to fill up every right demand of our fellow-workers and courage to openly and straightforwardly refuse unauthorised demands.

And it is as useless to keep in the chief's impregnable safe all facts and documents of accounting and other papers about the quantity, output and results of the undertaking, as keeping knowledge of things hidden in the chief's brain only.

But does not history tell us that almost all the battles were lost because the leader's idea was prematurely betrayed ?

How much time and energy the man needs to understand that these are only foolish excuses of incapable leaders and to leave aside all those learned babblings!

In reality most of the battles were lost because the people did not know their task, because the leader was a conceited drole, afraid about some of his capable men robbing him of his foolish ideas.

And everything, every idea, so long as it is secreted in one's brain, is sterilised and fruitless. It is like a small stone from which can be grinded the diamond. Every human idea needs the grindstone and those grindstones are only human brains.

Often inventors come to me and say : "You are the only man for whom I have the confidence that you will not betray my marvellous invention. I wanted to give it for patenting, but I am afraid of betrayal."

Their hands are shaking when they take out of their pockets their bits of papers, wheels and other things of their "marvellous" invention, and the more foolish the invention, the bigger is the nervousness.

I would have frequently burst into laughter if those people with the nervousness about their things would not remind me of my own struggle before I stopped running to the patent office and came to understand that the biggest reward for the thinker is the solution of the problem.

To solve the problem the thinker must have the faculties of his brain refreshed and developed to be sufficient for the performance of the task presented to him, just as a gymnast must first make his muscles strong and then have his first gymnastic performance.

All human properties, all the gold in this earth and also that which lies hidden in the earth under the pressure of mountains, are only play-things of the human brain, and all the power in this world is absolutely a devoted servant of this human brain. That some of the great thinkers are dying without power and poor

only because they either did not wish to carry on the responsibility or they were not really what they were made out to be.

I succeeded in preventing quarrels between our salesmen and customers about the prices and quarrelling of undertaking with its employees about the wages and I succeeded for the benefit of all. But I did not succeed up till now to stop quarrelling and remove suspicion from you, my employees. The majority of you represent in our undertaking independent undertakers, because your income depends on the results of your departments. Some of you have the idea that the success of your department depends upon how you succeeded in pressing down the price of goods to those departments which supply you, and how far you can get higher prices for your ready products from the departments to whom you are selling.

You, who are concentrating your brain for this to take advantage from your business friend as much as possible, are suffering and must suffer in your departments by the wastage of material and time. Remember the reply, which the most remarkable businessman of old Greece gave to Alexander the Great ; being questioned as to how he gained his riches, he replied simply : "I buy dearly and sell cheaply."

There is no bargaining in any of our shops. The first word is also the last one. And it is in our country as well as abroad. All our efforts are concentrated in filling up even those unexpressed wishes of our customers in the biggest possible measure.

For our success, of course, is not sufficient that only our undertaking should have the right standpoint towards the state, customer and towards the employees. It is necessary that also the members of our undertaking should have the same standpoint in dealing among themselves.

Only by co-operation and mutual harmony we can serve the public by our work and thus ensure prosperity for all.

## **THE IDEAL OF SELF-MANAGEMENT OF THE WORKSHOP**

*The idea of self-governing of the workshops, as visualised by Thomas Bata, is that it should change the mind of men—the mind of the wage-earner to be turned into an independent undertaker.*

*The undertaker's mind has initiative in the work. It should have the effort to reach with the least hard work the highest achievements. It fights against the losses. The motive for such thinking is the profit which depends on the inventive faculty of human beings. It is this inventive faculty, which invents new ways of service which can be offered to the people or made better and wider the existing ones, and offers this service in a way that always brings profit to all concerned.*

*The line of the wage-earner's thoughts is purely the wage system of work. This system is organizing the production on orders, work and wages. There is no foundation to the initiative and inventive faculties of a man and usually even not the opportunity to show them.*

*If it is found in some of the employees who have natural talent of undertaking, the results of their activities cannot be technically measured and the people are rewarded accidentally.*

*The height of nett profit of all undertaking is the outcome of thoughts, efforts, works and generally the undertaker's initiative and that of all the employees of that undertaking. The more economically every one is thinking and trying to make new inventions, even in the most small job, the bigger are the common results and common benefits.*

*The purely wage-earner's standpoint on which was organized the industrial production nearly in the whole of Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries is not a healthy foundation for productive and successful work. Besides the marked disadvantages it takes out of the worker the personal responsibility for his work.*

*The more effective is accord salary system in which skill and diligence of a single man is rewarded immediately according to the*

quantity of finished work; but there is, specially in the modern system, no personal responsibility for the ready product. The relation between the worker and the undertaker is limited to the quantity of ready pieces and salary envelope only. Between the worker and customer there is no contact at all.

The individual worker does not care about the common interest of the workshop. In accord work there is too much individualism and gives vent to too many unhealthy expressions of individualism.

The handicraft production of single craftsman, as it was in the old times, although was not very good as regards quality, had the initiative standpoint in the work.

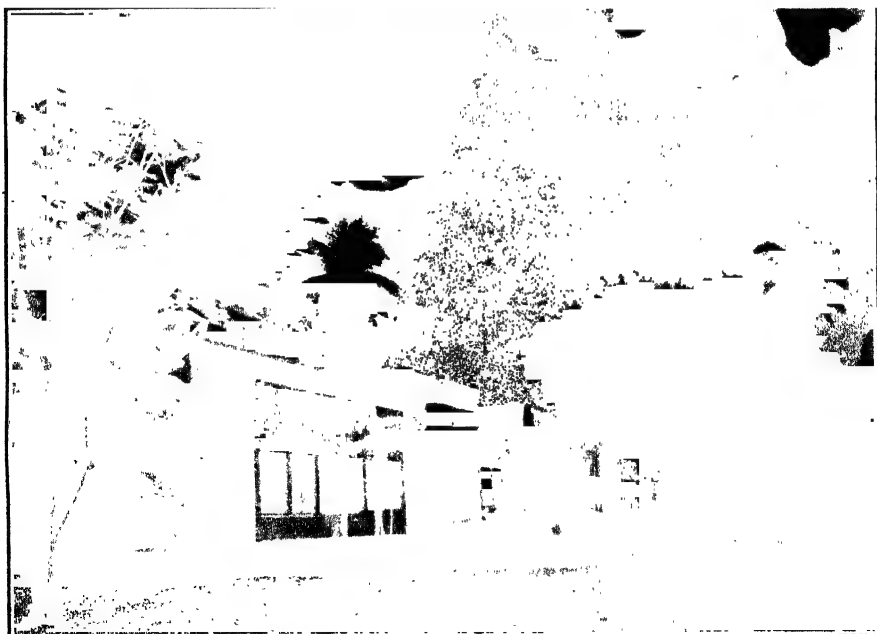
Every individual in it was the worker, craftsman and businessman. When the cobbler made the shoes, he knew well that his reward did not depend only on the lasting and stitching, but on how economically he cuts the pieces out of the leather, and whether the shoes are wearable and can be easily sold, in short, if those shoes are made in such a way that will guarantee him other work for future. This man who takes all responsibility for his work gets the result of his efforts and the desire to make more profit and earn more, teaches him to be careful about purchase of material, to be economic in their use, cautious during production and polite during the sale.

Thomas Bata, who comes out from the small beginning of a craftsman's career, had always in his mind the effectivity and usefulness of such kind of responsibility connected of course with the progress of scientific organization and modern system of work. He searched for that kind of working organization in which the individual worker in great concerns would be working with similar carefulness by saving time, energy, material and with responsibility as an independent undertaker and would be rewarded according to his merit.

He looked for the organization which would bloom the undertaker's ideas. Thus the organization, which is always continuously blooming, he named, "self-governing of workshop," because for the majority of people in the workshop it gives the possibility for



A typical house of the Batanagar colonies in brilliant light of the tropical day.

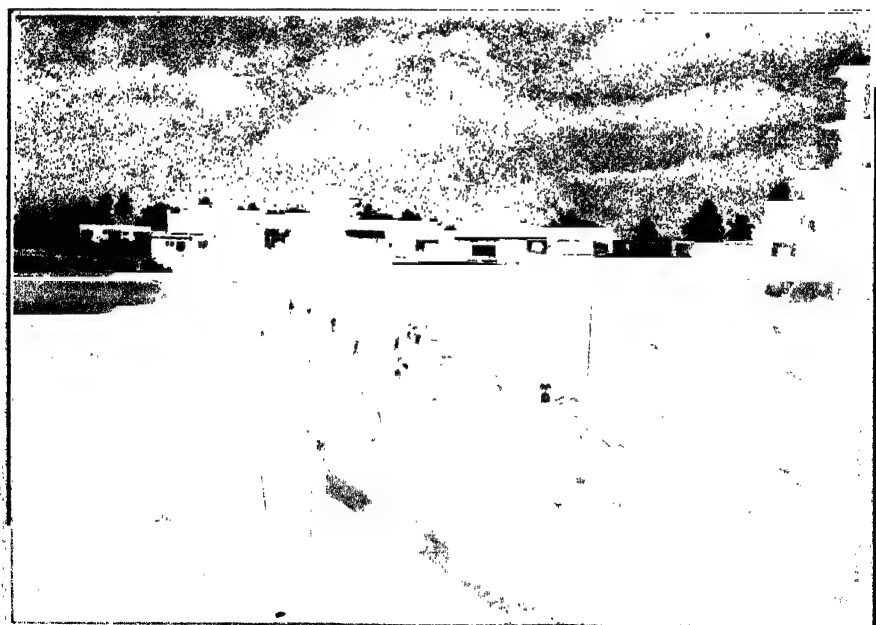


Another picture of the Batanagar living quarters in parks and green lawns.





The officers' colony from the top of the Club House.



Part of the Batanagar factory courtyard.

*participating by their capacity in managing and carrying on the production.*

## **SELF-MANAGEMENT IN PRACTICE**

Is built up on the principle, "from producer direct to customer." The raw material is purchased direct from the first producer and products being made under his control to transfer directly into the hands of the consumer, himself exercised control over the three phases of undertaking : Purchasing, Production and Sale.

The work of all concerned is thus the chain of better "cultivated scientific management." The concern itself is *de facto* the association of many hundreds of departments in which everyone has big possibilities of initiative and considerable economic independence. The independence of the departments is showed mainly by the following :

1. Every department has one person fully responsible for the work, loss and profit.
2. Independent balance sheet of loss and profit drawn every week.
3. Share of employees, foremen and many workers on the run and management of the department.
4. Personal responsibility of everyone in the department for his work.
5. Collective effort of the whole workshop in finishing the tasks on which depends the results of the department.

## **MANAGEMENT OF THE UNDERTAKING**

In the management of the undertaking is participating the majority of the people working in it.

At the head of every small workshop is a man—manager of the department—whose position and system of work are in some measures like the work of a renter who is working with rented capital (workshop, machines, energy, etc.) on the product by the system of betterment of efforts. The common work and co-operation of different departments and workshops arrange the mutual business agreement. By the giving

up and taking of ready products of one department to another, these departments dealing as strange (outside), firms, (quotations, calculations, time of delivery, etc., agreed upon). The control of these agreements is made partly by the calculation department and partly by the directors of the undertaking. Eventual misunderstandings are settled by the arbitration of impartial men.

The mutual charge of partly as well as ready made products is made also in the form of business. The control of quality of materials and ready products as well, is made in every workshop by special controllers, who are not, by service or wages, dependent on the manager of production to enable them to be impartial.

The whole work is made forward according to the detailed plan made one year in advance. This general plan is *de facto* a collection of many plans, estimates of work and results of different departments. It is based on the daily plans, i.e., on the quantity of work which is made during one calendar day of eight-and-a-half working hours. The harmony of all the departments is of course the unavoidable estimate for success in completion of this daily work.

## **PLANNED WORK**

### **The Struggle Against Chance**

*In very few jobs, even in these days, are there such wide possibilities for 'chance' playing its part as it is in business and production.*

*There are undertakings, where chance is a more powerful master than the Chief even. Chance gets even the official confirmation, if its result is taken once or twice a year in the balance sheet.*

*There was no bigger enemy of chance in business than Thomas Bata.*

*He excluded as much as possible in the whole undertaking the scope of chance exercising its power in the production. All the departments are working on the basis of estimates and plans which the manager makes half year in advance and how far it is reached*

*is daily and weekly controlled. The estimate is for the goods, money, results, in short, for every factor of the undertaking, and shows in percentage how much should the manager earn, how much the worker and how much the undertaking.*

*The workers make the estimate of their income in the specie books, which they get once a year from the undertaking.*

*In the special school for young men personal accounting according to the estimates is taught—a special independent part of education.*

## **PLANNING**

The Bata factories have special planned production schemes for purchasing, production, sale (and investments also) always half year in advance. The working calendar has about 300 working plans and about 65 non-working days a year including one week's holiday with pay.

The working plan of the whole undertaking is worked out from the plans of all its departments. The making up of all those plans are done by managers of the company, everyone for his department to the limits of his working possibilities.

The daily production plan for the whole undertaking is sub-divided from hundreds of plans of different departments to thousands of plans for each machine and person.

The accidental differences—not finishing the plan in the estimated time—are settled by "storno" i.e., stopping of unfinished work. Of course, every department has the biggest interest to have no "storno" at all, i.e., to work as estimated in the working plan. On this depends partly the height of the results. The department which did not finish its daily plan must pay to another department, which takes work from it and which is *de facto* losing on the unfinished plan, penalty to the extent of work reached by some other departments.

Of course, if, for instance, the leather factory cannot supply the estimated quantity of shoes to the sales department due to shortage of some raw material, the penalty is demanded from the particular section of the purchasing department.

By this arrangement it very seldom happens that the planned production is not reached by some of the departments.

But never is the planned production of the factory polluted or disorganised as on it depends the possibility of work and earnings of thousands of people. This is the best guarantee to every worker—his regular daily employment; thus every capable man is ensured that he will never get losses by the disorder or negligence of other workers.

## EDUCATION FOR LEADERS

*Buildings—they are only heaps of bricks and concrete. Machines—are only heaps of iron and steel. It is only the man who gives life to them.*

The success of every deal, in which participates more and more people, everything depends on the wisdom of its leader. The inconsiderate, foolish or weak leader may spoil the fruit of work of even those most capable and reasonable workers and of the most perfect machinery. Only under capable leaders the work of people and machinery gives harvest according to the leading abilities of the man who manage that work. The bigger his abilities, the bigger is the result.

More than anything else Thomas Bata took care of training for the development of the leading abilities of people who are standing at the forefront of those few hundred departments of which consist the undertaking in Zlin. I have not seen more effective and more perfect education than this. It is also valued by those men who have left the Bata organisation and now are working as competitors. Even the most stubborn competitors with whom I have had the opportunity to speak of "Thomas Bata's School" confirmed that. "Yes, Yes, from him I learned something", they said.

"When I find bad lasting or badly lasted heels in the shoes coming out from the workshop, this bad work does not interest me. But it interests me as to where and why were

the people corrupted in that workshop. It is absolutely clear that people with dirty character cannot do clean work." This was the lesson of Thomas Bata.

I remember one of those lessons, a hundred of which used to be held in a week and thousands during the year.

A member of the directorate, about thirty years old, who was responsible specially for the proper use and saving of leather consumption in the factory, was given the task of improving the management of about twenty workshops concentrated in one factory building. He came with the administration officer of that building—also a man of about thirty, a strong fellow—to the Chief to tell him how he would do it. "I will go there for about a week and I guarantee that the work will be in perfect order, just as I made it once before."

Thomas Bata silently listened and looked at both the managers, full of readiness and enthusiasm to start that work. He called another six people who have had nothing to do with this case, and said ;

"It is a big mistake for a man to be thirty. When I was at that age, I thought I could do my work by my feet just as good as by my head. When I had before me such work as is waiting now for you, I commenced just in the same way as you are doing now. I jumped straight into the centre of that work. I covered three steps in one and there was not a man in the workshop whose work I did not control. After a week of such toil I might see that the work was all right.

But after some time the workshop was again in a bad condition. Again toil from my side, new control. Nobody told me that in thirty years a man has better feet than head and that he wants always to do that work by feet which belongs to the head. Nobody told me that if I wanted to reach the production of good shoes, I must know psychology as well as the principles of shoe-making.

Psychology, the art how to play with such a vast and fine instrument as human soul, is for you and for your present

work most important. I will give you an example how last week I put in order one workshop that produced badly cut edges.

In that workshop three men were cutting edges on shoes. When I entered the working hall I had a good idea of their working abilities. I called the foreman and asked him which one of those three men was working best.

He showed me a brave man of middle age—a nice man, strong body, and polite. I watched his work and the work of his neighbours. His work was the worst.

This man knew really well how to build up and keep friendly relation with his foreman and managed it well.

He was from that type of men whom nature gives a nice appearance which itself wins sympathy. He took great care that people should always speak well of him. He succeeded so far that his foreman as well as manager succumbed to his words and appearance and formed their opinion not on the basis of his work but on the basis of his looks. The second edge cutter was not a nice looking man, the third one was completely taciturn. Although they worked much better than the good looking man, they still fell victim to the criticism of the foreman and manager. They were made responsible for bad edge cutting—in them the foreman always found the cause of mistakes.

The man very easily fell an easy prey to his nice looks. The pretty face, sparkling eyes, pleasant talks create sympathy and take one away from the way of justice. But if you are a foreman, a leading person, you have no right to be guided by emotions or natural call of your heart and judge a man and his work by the sympathy or antipathy, which he creates in you.

Those two edge cutters saw the bad work of their colleague and found that he still had the friendship of the foreman. The result was bad edge cutting in the whole workshop.

I told the foreman, "You allowed that man who is an enemy of your work, who spoils everything, to be your friend. His fellow-workers, who have not such physique and do not speak as well, realised that by good work they would not get your appreciation. They feel all the injustice which you are doing here and find out that it is no use being perfect workers under you.

"Go to your friend and tell him that you do not want to be his friend so long as he will do his work as he did till now. Tell him that for every fault in his work he might expect from you a punishment. Let him know that he has no other way of regaining your friendship than by perfectly doing his work which gives him, as well as you, a livelihood."

I read on the face and in the eyes of this man a struggle which was raging in his soul—a struggle which I created. He would have to take steps against his friend. He was almost upset. But he was in reality a good man. He succeeded in finding in himself the solid ground of justice from which he had slipped away, and the result was not only perfect edge cutting, but the creation of a working atmosphere for strong characters, which is the guarantee for perfect work. And this he succeeded only because he created a struggle in the soul of that nice looking edge cutter—a struggle which was the beginning of his spiritual rebirth.

I was in that workshop only once and for a little while. But long after that I thought about those men, by whose hands comes that work. Do you think I would have been able to do there an active leading work if I had not known the things which are above the workshop, which are not visible and if I had not carefully thought how to resist them ?

## THE PERFECT MACHINE

To the mechanics of factory's machinery department in the year 1927.

*The knowledge of the mechanics I don't put in the first place, but character and honesty. Only perfect men can create perfect machines.*



The mechanic is the creator of new times. Only those who are able to build the steel-slaves, i.e. machines, are capable of freeing humanity of slavery and provide them the well-being. But all of you are not able to create such complicated machineries as our craft needs by which our people might earn 100 crowns a day and produce shoes for customers for 29 crowns.

Our aim must be to take such men and mechanics, who are capable of creating perfect machines. I will work here in the machinery department with such men only who know how to make use of all those precious faculties of a healthy brain which God has given us. Those who are devoid of mental talents, we will send to farms or anywhere else where they may adopt manual work and be an asset to the people. If I allow them to work in the construction of machinery I would not only harm myself, but also those thousands who would work on their imperfect machines and millions of customers who would buy the product, which cannot be good, if made with bad machinery.

The knowledge of the mechanics I do not put in the first place, but character. Only a perfect man can make a perfect machine. It is not by chance that the best machinery are made in Anglo-Saxon countries where there are the best schools, highest standard of living and prosperity. The machines create all this for them.

In those lands now it is easy to build perfect machines because of easy possibility to find perfect people with open brains. In our country it is not so. But I will carry on my plan even if I must have to look for capable people with a candle in hand amongst all fourteen million people of our republic. I will not stop unless I find as many capable people as is necessary to build for ourselves the most needed machines and tools for our work.

For the production of machines the financial question does not arise. It is firstly the moral question that should engage our attention. If we reconcile with the idea that we are

unable to elevate ourselves to such perfection which is needed for creating a perfect machine, it means that we want to remain creatures which are nearer to the monkey than man. To such people machines will not be helpful.

Such men have not sufficient intelligence needed for their use; they will not understand the idea which the inventor puts into the machine. They will behave in front of the machine just as a monkey does in front of a clock when the owner is not at home. The clock stopped and because the monkey has acquired the habit of hearing the ticking sound, he moves the pendulum imitating the owner when he starts the clock. He does not know that it is necessary to wind an invisible spring which is inside the machine.

I am ready to change the leaders as well as the people led by them several times, until their work will bring prosperity to all.

Small production can be managed by small people. But big production can be managed only by great men—men who are great in their mind, character, will and knowledge. We are wanting in those leaders and may be that we must wait until they rise up from our young men whom we educate here. It is important for you and for the whole country to point out to me the men who are ready and able to materialise this great task.

## **CONCENTRATION**

### **To The Engineers of the Research Department**

It is very hard to train people and develop their powers for doing such heavy work as is research.

This work needs absolute discipline and order in our spiritual workshop—our mind. It is easy to compel ourselves to be engaged for some time in the workshop only in one kind of manual work and not run away every now and then. But it is not easy to compel a man to create in this spiritual workshop something new and not to think of anything else so long as the spiritual task is not finished. Up till

now nobody invented anything and nobody made any kind of spiritual work without concentrating his whole heart and mind in it from the very beginning to the finish.

We gave employment to many people in the research department for many years although those men gave very little work till now. The reason for their failure, so far as I can judge, was their inability to concentrate on one thing always.

The second reason of failure is in the aversion of researchers to physical labour, in the undermining of skill and experience gained by manual labour.

The researcher who wants to do positive work should gain the biggest skill in the work by himself going through all production details, because then only can he judge and recognise what improvements and what new things the work needs and what he wants to perform by his newly devised machine. And secondly, only by such a way will he understand and estimate all things which were put into the old machine devised by his predecessor who was also a researcher.

We are not afraid of failure of our researchers and we will not put off our efforts until we find the way to get good results from the old ones.

The spiritual work of organisers is directed by the same laws as work of the researchers. Their failure is due to the fact that they have no order in their spiritual workshop brain and therefore are unable to concentrate themselves in one problem only. It happens sometimes that the organiser, manager, or director spends great energy to try to bring his department to prosperity. But the more he works the less he succeeds and after sometime finds that he did not improve his workshop; on the contrary the order which was there before has vanished.

On the last occasion I examined carefully a foreman to whom was given the task of organising a sole department where 40 people were working in different kinds of work.

The foreman did not succeed in supplying ready products of good quality. To know the real measure of his inability, I gave him orders to put out of his mind all other people and concentrate himself only on four pressers of SNYT. The first and third of them worked on left shoes, second and fourth on right shoes only.

A careful observer would very easily find out which one of those four did his work best and which one the worst. I myself controlled the work and asked the manager his opinion of each one of the boys as to how they were working. The foreman was of opinion that one was working best, but I saw that his work was the worst. I was sure that he said to me what he thought and that he was not led by any personal interest.

But for the right decision was necessary a very close concentration which the foreman was unable to apply. His incorrect opinion takes out of him the possibility of success and renders his presence in that workshop nearly harmful.

I thought about the reason of his mistake. To solve the problem, I asked him once more to look on the pressed soles on producing shoes and thus to correct his opinion. I carefully watched him in that work and I found out that he had not in his work enough spiritual self-discipline. During the control of the soles he did not keep himself off the judgment of mistakes made by other workers and every little while rushed to remove those rubs. For the right judgment of the work of those four men it was necessary to examine a larger number of shoes made by each one of them and to see them during their work.

It shows that his inability to concentrate himself stands in the way of proper management of work of four people and that if he should be required to successfully manage the work of 40 people, he must firstly learn to concentrate his mind.

By running from work to work and trying to settle problems all at once he will never be able to settle any one of them.

All our failures are exactly of the same nature as the failures of that foreman. We do our work only by half, and from the more pleasant half. From what is hard we run away, either knowingly or unknowingly. And still the real settlement of every thing depends as well on that second half, that unpleasant part from which we are running away. The difference between a disciplined workman who concentrates his heart and soul in his work and the man who is doing his work only 50 per cent can be best expressed by the comparison of the doings of a dog and a monkey.

When a dog feels that a flea bites him he scratches himself and is satisfied when he drives away the flea for a while to another place. The monkey does that more cleverly. By the fingers he parts his hair to find the flea and kill it.

## **OUR RESTAURANT**

Our restaurant gave me many troubles last time. It is badly managed. I did all that was in my power, but still the rate of improvement was very slow. After controlling the kitchen I find that the sacrifice which our undertaking is making for providing good and cheap food for the employees did not come in full measure for the benefit of our employees.

Therefore, I decided to take lunch myself and all members of my directorate in our factory's restaurant. I arranged to instal a small kitchen whose task would be to prepare from the same foodstuffs the dishes with the greatest possible care, so that the results of the experiment might be transferred to all kitchens. Only in very few cases the big kitchen succeeded in preparing the same quality of food as prepared in the small kitchen.

We succeeded in improving the quality of meat, because we made much more strict control of animals. Also soup is now-a-days better. But still we must put all our efforts for radical betterment of all our dishes.

I am ready to spend as much energy as will be necessary to have our dishes perfect. But we must demand our employees also to take part in this heavy work. Send us your opinions, propositions and projects as to how to better our kitchen and restaurant. Show us all our mistakes. All those proposals send directly to me.

## BATA'S WORKING ORDERS

*The most individual expression of organizational art of Thomas Bata was his working orders which he used to give to responsible men regarding certain problems. Eight volumes of them are there, and from them can be seen how he tackled and solved those innumerable problems that presented themselves before him everyday and how he educated his fellow-workers. All the strength of his character, the thoroughness of his considerations, his knowledge about things and persons, and the strength of his views are expressed in those orders, only a few of which we publish below and which, we hope, will be found interesting. It is clearly seen from them that perfect cleanliness and order in the factory and town and continuous betterment of work in the undertaking was not accidental, it was not by chance, but there are very good reasons behind them. How did Thomas Bata give out his orders? Some of them, the longer ones, were dictated to the typist, the others he wrote himself immediately on the spot where he found the necessity of taking steps for improvement. His method he expressed in one of his speeches to the Prague students in 1927: "Let us arm ourselves for the work with the best and sincerest of purpose. Look at this pencil tied to the chain. Such a pencil is more easy to hold than a free one. By using this system you can save thousands of seconds daily. By using a pocket book with loose papers also your productivity can be greatly increased. When you have these two valuable helpers not a single idea can escape you—not even those which come to your mind when you are somewhere at the top of the chimney or down in the canal."*

*In the orders published below we mention only the first letters of real names:*

## **POWER HOUSE**

**Mr. B.—**

Your chimneys in the power house are heavily smoking between 6 and 7 a.m. in the same way as they were smoking yesterday while I pointed it out to you. I find that you are coming to work just before 7 a.m. This, of course, takes away all possibilities of seeing things with your own eyes. It is the same with the power house as in feeding cattle.

It is needless for the farmer being all day on the earth, if he is in bed when his domestic servant is feeding his cattle.

Chief 7-11-1931.

## **PURCHASING**

**Mr. C.—**

The old proverb says : The merit of the farmer can be seen in his dunghill. What is dung for a farmer, scraps, old materials and waste-regenerate for the industrialist? The future of industry depends on the question of regeneration of those scraps.

You can best judge how far you are an economist if you see the stock of your wastes.

For this you cannot court the labourers, who stocked them, responsible. Those labourers do not know that in every kilogram of wastes of upper leather there is 20 per cent of fats, (@ 4.—crowns kg. is 80 hallers in one kilo) and that this waste material can again be used in many ways. They do not know that you have had installed two special machines which take out fats from those wastes. They do not know also that the refuse is used as a quality manure for farming. Those labourers cannot decide about those wastes if you cannot decide about them.

All this you must know as an expert and your duty should be that these properties must not go to destruction.

The labourers, who stocked those waste materials or those who will later work with them, should be your best assistants who will tell you from which workshop come those unnecessary wastages and enable you to take proper steps.

I wish you could see those wastages at once and at 2 p.m. return me this letter with your remarks as to what steps you took in this matter and what you will do in future. For all losses which will come to us by improper use of those wastes, we will count you fully responsible.

Chief—12-11-1931.

*Thomas Bata was a non-smoker. Therefore, this note to the manager of a warehouse is interesting.*

**Mr. H.—**

Near the tobacco shop are always crowds of people. They use one door as the entrance and exit. Arrange at least that there should be one door for going in and one for going out.

Chief—16-8-1931

**Mr. K.—**

During my last control of the new warehouse and restaurant I did not find on the tables of the dining hall any drinking water or salt.

Chief—27-1-1931

## **POWER HOUSE, GAS HOUSE, RAILWAYS**

**Messrs. Z.B.D.—**

If any irregularity takes place in the power house, gas house and on the railways, you, who are responsible persons, must apologise to the public.

For the last stoppage of electricity on 7th inst. Mr. B., who is responsible for the power house, did not apologise. The same applies to Mr. D. and the railways. If the wagons are not heated enough, if the train is late and does not reach the junction of other trains in time, it is necessary to apologise to the public.



The same trouble occurred in the gas-house. On Sunday last our cook was not able to cook the dinner. It is necessary to find the reason of improper supply of gas.

Chief—10-11-1931.

## **THE LODGING DEPARTMENT**

**Mrs. S.—**

The lodging department must fulfil its task perfectly. It is not sufficient to do its work as is done till now, but you must always make wider the circuit of your department's duties. Thus, for instance, I heard that people in colonies do not know how to use the modern air-heating and still the lodging department did not arrange an instructor who, specially in the beginning of winter, should go and see all inhabitants of colonies and explain to them the use of the heating apparatus. Such an instructor should visit the colonies several times a year and must have an evidence about those who need explanation more often. He must have an evidence about all defects which were pointed out to him during his previous visit.

This is meant also for the gas-heating and for many other arrangements.

Chief—1-6-1931.

## **THE TOWN**

**Mr. Z.—**

To-day you have very dirty roads.

How is your new sweeping car working ?

Do you know how to work it yourself ?

Near the slaughter house I see many gypsies. Find out if they are getting any wastage or if the slaughter house makes some business with them. Try to prevent both things.

Chief—2-11-1931.

## **THE TOWN**

**Messrs. S. S.—**

To-day I met two policemen, Mr. A. S. and Mr. F. P. They walked almost in the centre of the road in such a way that a car was unable to pass them. The policemen turned to the

side-walk, but their movement showed that they were angry, that they, masters of order, must have to make place for traffic !

Their attitude shows their effort to show the driver their authority and privilege.

It is necessary that the education and training of our policemen should be directed entirely in a different way. The policemen should know clearly that they are paid by the public to serve them and not to show people their power only to satisfy their vanity.

We have nothing against them if they will show their power in such cases where they serve other people and which are beneficial for the public, but we do not want them to show their power only from their personal reasons.

Chief—4-11-1931.

## THE TOWN

Mr. R.—

I find that you put on the lights of the streets at 7 p.m. although it is dark even before 5 p.m.

The last time also you lighted the main road very late.

Chief—

*If the orders were more wide and were meant to introduce new duties and responsibilities for longer periods, Thomas Bata put them in the agreement of the officer concerned in which was clearly mentioned the task, the way to perform it and also reward. How consistent was Thomas Bata in this working method can be seen from the following order—an agreement with his own son, which is also otherwise interesting.*

*It shows with what democratic ideas he managed the education of his own son and all young people in Zlin.*

## THE STUDY OF MATHEMATICS

Mr. Thomas Bata Jr.

By learning mathematics you should have in your mind the acquisition of a large number of pupils, especially young men, from every department and give them lessons in mathematics.

I have in mind the installation, electric, mechanic, building and other departments. Those employees will of course study mathematics in leisure periods which their departments will allow them, together with you. The examinations in mathematics they will pass also together with you.

Make a list of all those lads who have an interest in it. Publish the announcement in one of our newspapers and put this publication on important boards of different departments to make it possible for every young man to read them.

In that publication write that young men will have terms for examination in certain parts at certain times. Otherwise they will be turned out of their respective departments, because mathematics is the most necessary knowledge for their work.

We are able to offer you a certain premium for each fellow-student who will successfully come out of the examination of his part together with you. Such a premium we are ready to offer also to the school. In this work firstly let Director Hradil (Director of schools for young men) help you together with Mr. Hradek.

Thomas Bata, Sr.

Zlin, 22nd March, 1932.

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IV

## THE ECONOMIST



*"Its only on that field there is rich harvest on which the peasant himself walks behind the plough."*

*"Take advice, I know how to practice economy. I learned how to gain pennies and also millions."*

*"I do not want to work in business with people who look on business as a means of robbing, who want to rob others for 20-30 years and then escape with the spoils. I want to work in business only with people who decide to remain in it upto death, who take business as service for their whole life. Such service only can give good livelihood to everyone."*

*"He who chases money will never get it. Take care of your work, do it better than your neighbour and money will find its way to you."*

*"The day has 86,400 seconds."*

*"Nothing spoils the producer and businessman—and even those very capable men—so much as money easily gained."*

*"Every human dealing at the end must express itself somehow in figures."*

*An almost unaccountable quantity of sparkling sentences and brilliant ideas illuminate the strongest side of Bata's personality: Economy and economic sense. It is no wonder that many, looking at his continuous economic success, attributed those successes to mere chance or effects of situation. But in Bata's economical consideration there was no place for chance or situation. "The situation is not at fault, guilty are always those men who fail to make good use of it. The situation must be caught, and handled or man cannot conform to the situation. The situation is just like a stick. When it strikes you, it is up to you to catch it and use it as your tool."*

*"In economy there is no question of understanding the situation; the problem is how to handle it." That is living Bata—economical, active, full of strength, which is betrayed by his sparkling blue eyes the forcefulness of which one can never get over. "We did not create this world situation, but I am not ready even to be sorry for it", he thundered in one of the factory's conferences in 1932 when the world was shaken by great economic and*

industrial crisis. "I am not afraid of the situation, on the contrary, I am enthusiastic about it," he said. It seems to be like a sneer at the logically explained reasonable views expressed daily in thousands of papers throughout the world which announced the necessary failure of living people. "Go to hell with the reason which wants to prove to me that I should hang myself. The more critical the condition of the world the more is the necessity for work. And even if I should work for nothing, I will not run away from my work." While he stands there, apparently rough and incomprehensible with his queer logic with which he did not want to convince the scientists and politicians, he stands like a lion behind the bars and creates in us all fright, awe, admiration and faith in his doctrine. He was like revolt personified against all failure, oppression and foolishness which is widespread in the economic life of the prodigalists of human values and egoists, who have not seen beyond their own pockets. Even those who did not understand him, feel that truth is on his side, because his views meant life, not dying slowly—not the life full of trudging wearily and refusal, but life with hope of victory and occupying the first rows of economic success.

With this picture of Bata—economist, fighter—is combined the picture of Bata—economist, a wise sower, warm like the moderate heat of a May-day, promising big harvest.... "Every father should make with his six year old son an agreement on monetary matters, and to make it possible somehow that according to this agreement he should earn his own money. Every 6 year boy is old enough to learn to administer his property."

"Give to the child in school a garden on one or two square metres of land, allow him to work independently on it and give him also the output. Thus the child can learn more than from books." "Earn much, spend reasonably and be thrifty—that is the programme. The Americans, and even Ford, have no truth so far as the instalment business is concerned. It cannot be to life—life on instalments forward; it leads only to bankruptcy. It is our duty to make free our fellow-workers from slavery to capital, let them make capital their slave. In this we will succeed especially in youth, if we will teach them to control their passions and teach them in schools the technique how to gain, manage and preserve capital."

Why this had such great effect and why it influenced people not only in the undertaking, in town, but in all countries, all the world and the hearts of all active men? Because it comes out from the heart, which all along was fighting for human freedom—the only freedom of our century; economic freedom. Freedom never was easily gained and especially not without a fight and without personal sacrifices. It is not an easy life which leads Thomas Bata the economist. But it is a strong life, which teaches to depend only on oneself, one's own power and co-operation, which considers presents, subventions and supports to be unworthy of healthy, mature people.

“By showing kindness and giving presents we cannot help people. We must teach them to depend only upon themselves and to help themselves.” In this sense Thomas Bata was, and for a long time will remain, the teacher of people from whom he came.

## THE FREEDOM OF TRADE

I am for absolute freedom of trade. The new inventions bring new and better systems of work. Now-a-days it is not possible to force a man to keep all his life in such a system of work which later becomes obsolete. By not getting a chance of trying other crafts he himself suffers and so does society.

The old craft and old trade must give way to the new, better system of work, better trade, better craft, just as the old day yields place to new one and old misery to new and better times.

The highest ideal of a real tradesman finds expression in the desire for growth. The desire for betterment, the effort to increase his undertaking and capital—more valuable than money, and power—more powerful than electricity. The effort for growth brings us ideas, examples and strength under which our trade is daily expanding.

Let us consider our small trade as a temporary measure and let us examine our foremost duty to make ourselves big traders. Even if a situation or obstacle was so strong that we could not succeed in inclining to this ideal, then let us not put impediments in the path of our children to attain these high



ideals. Thus at least let us prepare for them the way and strengthen them by our example. Let our failures be an incentive to encourage them to better ideals.

Every trader is big or small according to his own capacities and how he feels in his spirit. I remember that advertisement of Young Company from Boston, which offered 25 years ago in special newspapers all over the world the heel making machines.

The advertisement created in my mind visions of a great factory with huge connections all over the world. When on my first visit to America I searched for Young factory, I found to my dismay that the working factor of this world-known undertaking consisted of father and son only, both of whom I found with their shirt sleeves rolled up working with their own hands. This American tradesman I shall always remember and his example greatly impressed me and taught me that it is not the greatness of buildings and workshops but the spirit of an undertaker which decides if the undertaking should cater for a dozen customers of the town or serve millions all over the world.

Let us take care about ourselves, because it is only then we can take care of our families, our fellow-workers, our city and state.

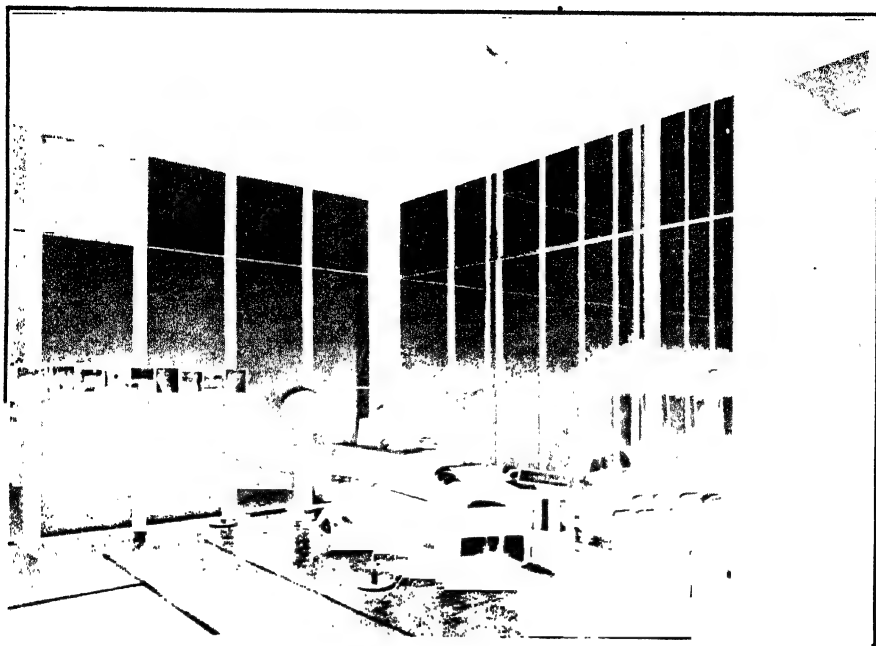
The businessman, tradesman, undertaker are there to offer certain services to people by their work. The success of this service depends firstly on his health, activity, education, experience and talent. The more he takes care of himself, the more he exerts himself in bringing out those desirable properties, the more he can be useful to the people. Success in business is seen and measured only in terms of money and by property.

Let us organise ourselves for greatness and development of trade, for our well-being. Let us not organise with a small object in view; let us not suppress those great powers in us which enable us to surpass all obstacles. So many possibilities,



Thomas Garrigue Masaryk, the liberator, builder and the first President of the Czechoslovak Republic, speaking to late Thomas Bata in Zlin in the year 1928. "Thomas Bata said to me on one occasion that his chief ideal was to manufacture 100,000 pairs of shoes daily. This concrete formulation of ideals is what everyone of us needs in every branch of work."  
(T. G. Masaryk in 1929)





This was the working room of Thomas Bata up to the day of his death. (Picture from the Thomas Bata Memorial in Zlin)



From Thomas Bata's visit to India. At the airport in Gwadar, Baluchistan.

powers and obstacles try to press us down that it will be like committing a sin if we tie our hands and surrender to these drawbacks.

The way is the way to truth, to reality. Truth and reality form the only foundation on which can be built a business. Wonderful words are nice things and might also be useful, for instance, to those politicians for whom the main asset is their voice. But wonderful words will not bring you money, because we live in a world where nobody is ready to give us something for nothing. Where every "Credit" has its "Debit."

Let us exert the biggest effort to know the truth about ourselves and about the world. Let us not lie and flatter ourselves, but also not allow others to lie and flatter us.

Let us take good care of the man who comes to us with flattery, who speaks about our perfection, about all which should have been done for us and which was not done.

If we allow those idle talks, they will rule our hearts and from that very moment we will leave the ground of reality and shall be soaring high in the domain of vain glory.

One of those superstitions, very dangerous for tradesmen, which causes the downfall of most adult people, is a notion of our own perfection. By refusing information, refusing other's instruction, by conviction it prompts one to believe that there is nothing more to know, and that there is no need to learn from anybody.

Let us keep ourselves open for instructions coming from any side. Nobody in this world is wise enough and knows everything. Let us button up our mind and will to all that is before us and above us. We must push our way up following the examples of successful men and try to find out the reason of their success.

The effort to lighten or lower those who are before us will not help us go up, but will push us down to failure.

Never has the tradesman who has a mouth full of slander and heart full of envy to the success of others, become rich. Those who are habituated in making public the mistakes of their competitors are seldom successful themselves. But he who presents to his customers his services with words of sincere politeness and whose eyes can recognise in the competitor the good qualities rather than the bad side of his nature in order to improve himself, will never have adverse times.

Let us not be afraid of competitors. They will not defeat us. They are far away. But what will surely defeat us is the dust in our show-window, in regals and tables, because they will drive out of our shop every customer, besides ruining our health.

The measure of prosperity of inhabitants of all places depends on how rich or poor are its tradesmen. The poor tradesman who makes his trade in small, poor measures, cannot serve the customer in spite of his best wishes in the same way as his richer colleague can. Such a poor tradesman cannot employ helpers and assistants and if he does, he cannot pay them good wages.

The poverty in earthly things may be preferable to many; there are men who like to remain poor. But for a craftsman it is always bad because from his misery grows up the misery of his nation and the misery of his fellow countrymen. His duty is to wish to be rich in knowledge as well as in properties—wish to grow up, widening his undertaking, and improving it. And if he did not leave to his children anything more than good example and will for growth, he left for them enough to guarantee them a good future and for himself a revered memory.

## WHAT I WISH IN OUR BUSINESS

The prosperity of inhabitants of a country can be ensured only when production serves the business, and business the production. Thus people employed in the production can get enough work with good earning and people

employed in business will get larger turnovers and bigger profits, because production and business together helps the customers in getting cheaper and better goods. The search for ways how to help customers in getting good and cheap goods is in all sense a human mission of business and businessmen.

The businessman is the nerve and feeler of human society. In him begins all difficulties of which people suffer, nobody can help him out of his troubles but he himself.

The root of those difficulties lies in the fact that our production in its evolution has reached the level of the 20th century, but the level of business remains still in the middle ages. The modern producer understands that he can work successfully only when he concentrates on his production, when he can specialise on certain products and when he takes the help of science. He comprehends that good and cheap products and good wages he can achieve in his undertaking only by production of goods in small varieties but in large quantities. But such production is possible only when business is so arranged that it can take care of it. It means that this business must be divided in most wide regions to have the nearest way to the customer who needs those products.

What I desire in our businessmen and particularly in those in the smaller sphere is to deal bravely and always remember that in business the most important things are—principle of service and will to grow. Firstly to serve and secondly increase their business and their work with the biggest effort on a wider region and for more people.

I wish our businessmen to have more inclination to improve working conditions. While I say this I have in mind those situations which retard the very root of any possibility of good business. I have in mind those narrow, dark shops with small windows, stuffed with goods, with overcharged regals and drawers, where fresh air and sunlight never enters

during the whole year. Here is your chief enemy who saps day by day your health and joy of work, every progressive idea, and drives the customers out of your shop. Either you will win over him or he over you, if not this year, then next year or after ten years, but there is no compromise. But only a few businessmen know the danger of that enemy and can find the solution. Most find the reason of their failure everywhere except in themselves and their shops.

The modern businessman, same as the modern producer, needs modern tools. He needs a shop which offers most pleasant conditions for commercial purposes, which is airy, clean and well-lighted and in which it is a pleasure to remain, both for the customer and the shopkeeper. I have not in mind luxury with marbles and mirrors but I have in mind the luxury of light, cleanliness and order.

Do not try to find the enemy of our business in the competitor or tax-collector. They are far away from us. The most dangerous enemy lies in ourselves, in our shortcomings to the main things on which our business entirely depends.

Every businessman is a conqueror, and a most noble conqueror, because he fights for the possibility of service to the people. Every businessman, even a small milkman, should have on his wall a map of those few streets he serves and should always think how and where he can make his region wider.

He should have the ambition to supply milk for the whole town and, if he succeeds, to try to supply milk for the district. But he should not blissfully lay down on this success, he should not allow himself to be knocked down by his own snug ; on the contrary he should try to offer his services to the neighbouring towns. Such a businessman builds up a well-being and prosperity for all—for his undertaking, for his fellow-countrymen, producers, and specially for the customers. And such a businessman derives the greatest satisfaction for his brave and honest endeavour.

I wish our businessmen to regard how important for business are transport facilities. Businessmen's one aim is to demand better facilities for transport, better roads and cheaper means of conveyance as these are instrumental in bringing about better business.

Every milkman, vegetable dealer, baker, butcher—every businessman needs a car and good roads. So long as he carries on his business only on the flat earth on which he can move by his feet, he will rather die ten times than gain success for himself and prosperity for his customers. By the time our baker moves in the morning with fresh bread to serve two streets, his colleagues serve twenty villages by the road side in countries where there are asphalt roads and cheap cars.

From this everybody can imagine the difference in profit of those two men. The one toiling more, gains less and the one working more comfortably gains more.

The businessman without transport is like an army without horses and cars. Having no possibility of movement he will remain in one place, and it is only the question of time when he will be defeated.

The businessmen who have courage and will to gain for their business a greater sphere will take every technical help which serves their purpose and will make it the property of the public.

They will instal telephones in every small shop which will enable the customers to make their purchases through telephone and which will make connection between the businessmen and producers easier and quicker. They will build up such business which newspapers and journals offer or create for them. They will read those most useful parts of the newspapers—advertisements—from which they will come to know what they can buy or sell.

The businessman is the salt of the earth. The measure of well-being and prosperity of the nations depend on the ability of their businessmen. But also the sweet fruit of civilisation



The more complicated organisation is in the production of bricks where every work is done by different groups of people and every group is led by different interests as regards time and quality of the production. If the organisation is not good, the output of the workers, although they may use the most modern machineries, will be poor. In consequence the standard of wage will be very low.

And what about such products which consist of many finely worked out parts, of which every one is produced in different departments and moves through many hands? There harmony among the people is the most important factor for good results of work. It is necessary that everyone should be impressed by some idea to put into his work not only his hands, but also his heart just as we see in the work of a farmer. Only by such a way can be gained the working results which will satisfy all concerned, *i.e.*, customers, workers and also undertaker.

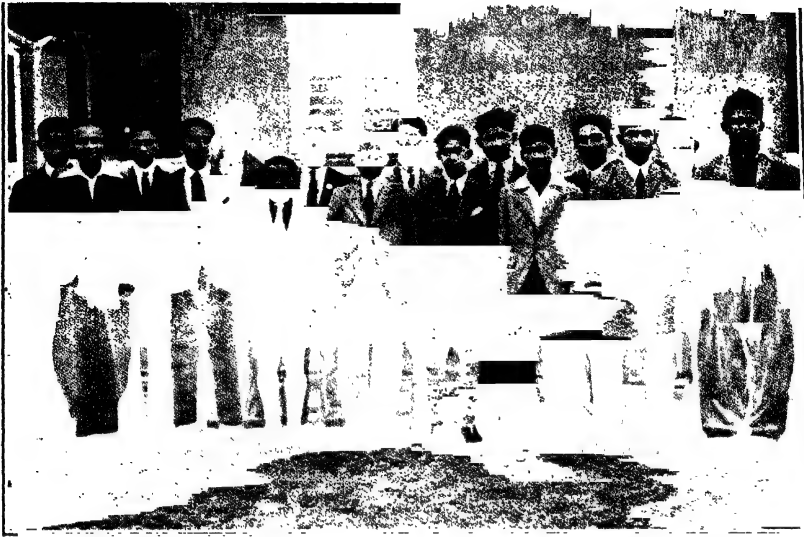
This harmony and conformity was clouded mostly by the belief of the workers who had an idea that the profit gained is not rightly and justly divided.

A great American industry solved this very difficult problem and shows the world outside the only right way. Some of the American undertakers put their undertakings to the service of the public.

They laid the benefit of customers and workers in the front place. By this they won the hearts of all customers and workers and from that time the workers are competing with the customers in the service to a common aim.

Due to this mutual co-operation, workers wages have improved, customers receive better products at cheaper prices and undertakings daily expanding.

It looks like Columbus' egg but it is not similar. It is a moral problem. Those undertakers renounced all benefits of their excellent positions which guarantee comfortable life and became themselves front rank workers of their undertakings.



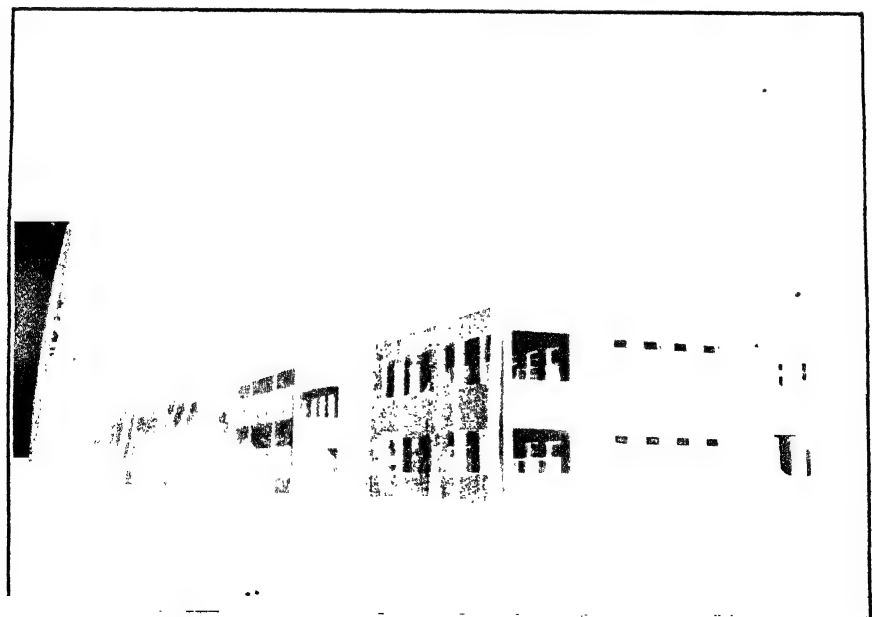
Shortly after the visit of Thomas Bata to India, these sixteen young boys from this country were sent to Zlin for three years' practical training in the Bata shoe factory there and to get necessary education in the famous Bata School of Work.



The very same boys to-day—now holding responsible positions in Batanagar and elsewhere. At the time of taking this picture—only five above boys were in Batanagar—others were either on business tour or on leave.



Like the palaces crystal from Thousand and One Nights appear these houses of the Batanagar living colonies illuminated by the evening street lights.



Another picture from Batanagar at night—the row of houses for the bachelor employees.

From the common plate of duties they took for themselves the biggest portion and the smallest portion from the plate of advantages.

Those personal sacrifices consecrate their work and enable them to earn the confidence of their customers and workers and resist the competitors.

For this excellent example we are more thankful to America than for all those inventions of modern times.

This way leads the human society towards peace and stabilisation and preserve for every working man such measure of well-being as he contributes by his work to the general prosperity.

## **THE IMPEDIMENTS OF PROGRESS IN PRODUCTION**

*The manifesto of Thomas Bata in the International Congress for scientific management of work in Prague 2nd August, 1924.*

Yesterday's and to-day's speakers spontaneously expressed their assent, sympathy and enthusiasm for progress in production, which is the basis for this Congress.

I am just 30 years an undertaker, 29 years I have fully known how great a service renders a man who makes better and simple production for the present as well as future generations. Therefore, even in my young age the progress in production I made my life's task and ideal.

My long years of experience tell me that to attain progress in production the expression of sympathy and assent or that of enthusiasm is not sufficient. The progress in production demands on hard, stiff work and also personal sacrifice of all the people involved in the work—undertakers, officers and workers.

The progress in production has no direct enemies, but has many impediments. The biggest obstacles are discord and individualism.

It is human nature that everyone wants to make sure for himself all benefits which progress is expected to bring, even before he puts all his efforts for attaining it.

The accord salary is one of the ways which reward the inventor-worker for small progresses in production, because it makes of the worker some sort of a small undertaker, who gains on his own output.

But also in accord salary the worker may have apprehensions that if his better method is introduced to all other workers, the accord rate will be reduced. Here human nature's pet failing, egoism, plays the part of brake to progress.

Big progress in production is based on small improvements realised in every walk and move of man. All the employees should exert for progress and improvement in a factory, not to speak of the employer himself.

This biggest impediment will be the undertaker when he understands that he is obliged to divide results which come out of the progress in production, rightly amongst workers, customers and the undertaking.

The confidence in this just division of those results will be established in customers and workers only for that undertaker who understands that his undertaking, although is registered in the books as his own property, should firstly serve the customers and workers or, in short, serve the public.

The worker, same as the customer, will soon find out if the undertaker is out to make sure only of his own interest or if he searched in the undertaking the possibility as to how its resources can be used firstly for the benefit of others.

In such undertakings, where the undertaker feels himself as a front rank worker and is always prepared for sacrifice where progress in production demands the highest personal sacrifices, the biggest impediment from the way of progress in production is removed. In such undertaking are removed losses from the quarrels over wages and losses from the bargaining with the customers about the price of products.

The morality of the undertaker cannot be forced by law, or by any other compulsory thing. Even the most valuable social law is sometimes more harmful than beneficial to the working people, because the law may require of the undertaker to be beneficent but nobody can be ordered to be or to remain an undertaker. And even those worst undertakers are better than no undertaker at all.

This high moral level of undertakers will be rising from the increasing undertakings. Only a good undertaker can and will push away the bad one. The hard fight of competition will make this classification. States or private monopolies, every binding on life's freedom and any unhealthy protection of undertakers; either big or small, on the home or abroad competition, leads to the lowering of production morality and is impediment to progress in production.

## **BUSINESS AND CHEATING**

**Speech in the year 1925**

Majority of the people have the conviction that big property cannot be gained by honest work. The basis of this public opinion can be found in tales about rich people in every country. People seem to believe that nearly every rich man who has amassed a fortune has acquired those riches through some irregular way and many fantastic stories are told. Thus for instance, in our town there was a tale about Mikulas Kasperek, who was for thirty years mayor of Zlin and who really deserved the remembrance and gratitude of every Zlin citizen. Of this man it was said that he gained his property in the following way. On his way to the market he was driving his carriage behind the carriages of some generals when he saw that from one of the carriages fell an iron chest containing money. He at once picked the chest up, hid it in his carriage and drove away from Olomouc. Hardly had he passed the town gate when he heard behind him the blow of a trumpet for closing of all the gates of the town.

And still the property of this our citizen was not larger than the property of anybody else.

Another similar story: Near Uherske Hradiste there was a provisions business of one Emanuel Furst. This man built up near his one-storied house another two-storied house and after some time a third one. Thus his neighbours believed that he was a rich man and at the beginning of his opulence they explained: In the year 1866 during the Prussian war Furst joined the Prussian King against the Austrian Kaiser. The Austrian police found that a barrel sent by him contained gold coins. (The porters dropped the barrel on the ground and broke it and gold coins came out.) Furst was sentenced to death, but received pardon from the Kaiser, but, they put round his neck a black ribbon as a sign of this sentence and Furst received orders that every year he must build some houses to provide poor people with work.

These tales originate from the conviction that the property of one must have been taken somehow from another. People consider property as an object which can be kept only by one or the other but never by all of them. From this comes out the idea that business and industry are mediums for wholesale cheating.

However, the way of gaining property is entirely different. Property in the most developed states can be gained only by one thing—by honest management of production or business by honest undertakers.

By honest business I mean that all parties participating in business must be after the business transaction richer than before. The honest management of production or business means the creation of values or increasing of properties not only for oneself, but for all who are participating in that business or production. Business or industry is more honestly managed where less profit is left for the producer or the businessman and as bigger benefit transferred to his business friends or fellow-workers with whom he runs the business or production. By honest division of those

results the businessman or producer gains mainly on the increased number of his customers or fellow-workers. Great concerns can be built and managed only by the highest form of honesty and sincerity, i.e., by the most favourable division of gained properties amongst other participants. Therefore, it is natural that the businessman or tradesman cannot gain by any other way than by creating benefits which he gives to others, because the benefit is the only thing which customers or fellow-workers always look for. And if they may be assured that somewhere else they will be getting more they will change the place of purchase or work. Therefore, it is only natural that the tradesman who offers bigger benefit expands his undertaking and those who offer less go down, because they lose customers and also good workers. Always bear in mind that it is the duty of all of us to create and enlarge the property of whatever nature it may be.

Have always in your mind that possibilities for increasing properties are unlimited and the more values they create the more easily they can be increased. Everybody can be rich: our only misconception is that all people cannot be equally rich.

The higher the standard of morality of producer and businessman, the richer is the public and the whole country. There can be no opulence where people engage themselves in swindling each other, because they have no time for the creation of values or properties.

Once a statesman complained to Rothschild about the low business morality of the Jews. Rothschild replied: "Every country has such Jews, which merit it." In Central Europe the term businessman was unconditionally connected with the Jews, and, therefore, a Jew meant a businessman.

The level of morality of a businessman and industrialist is closely connected with the cultural level of the country or nation. During the Great War a certain businessman complained of the situation in Austria saying: "In Russia I know



at least that I must give some bribe, in Austria I do not even know if I can or cannot bribe."

There are nations which value, of all their properties most, the virtue of their businessmen and industrialists. In 1919 I started an office in Lynn, Mass. I sent my correspondent, Miss R., to find out and get quotations for office furniture from a firm of cabinet makers.

Before she came back two of our business friends entered my room and with all bitterness told me that the correspondent was trying to get some commission for herself. The furniture dealer himself asked those friends to inform me about the dishonest ways of my correspondent.

This is how the advanced countries are defending the business morality. On the contrary, there are countries where the businessmen are spoiling the staff of their business friends by secretly offering them bribes. There are also such countries where one businessman freely allows others to bribe his staff.

It is interesting that in places with high business morality we find a large number of rich businessmen and industrialists while in lands with low business morality the businessmen and industrialists are mostly poor and the people are in a very bad condition. It is, of course, natural because they want to gain prosperity only by cheating one another instead of trying to create values for the benefit of all.

It may also be said, "pay at the time". I know many businessmen who abide by this old and healthy saying, but I know also many who are not dealing according to it. Many people have an idea that it is business wisdom to hold back payment of bills as long as possible. There are many who have money in bank and remain in debt. They do not know that money is best saved after debts have been paid off.

## **BATA AND TRANSPORT**

*If Thomas Bata had any passion for which he lived it was for speedy and quick transport. "I am a very old man considering the quantity of work I did in my life. And for that I must be grateful*

to transport. "We made a trip in two months which was nearly encircling the globe on our latitude," he said in 1932 after his return from India. "We are obliged to feel indebted to those great inventors and pioneers of aviation who sacrificed even their lives to build for us these new machines. To them goes the credit that in a few weeks we made a tour for which previously it would take years."

But the greatest interest and care Thomas Bata took for the most common basis of transport: the road. In his passion for improving and constructing roads he was like the citizens of old Rome—those Romans who created the greatness of the state by and on roads which lasted thousands of years work on roads he began always from those nearest and under his own control: In his factory he constructed excellent straight asphalt roads with perfect cleaning arrangements. And after his first election as mayor he presented to the citizens—"He who shortens the roads, makes life longer" written in bronze letters on the pavement which attracts at once the eyes of every visitor to Zlin.

From the town he turned his efforts to the district, province and the whole state. Before he was elected to the State Road Committee, he prepared all details about the state's road economy and investments for the next ten years so that by that period the Czechoslovak Republic might be, in building up of roads and improving road economy, among the leading western countries. It is also interesting that Thomas Bata pointed out at that time (1928) the danger of unemployment, which could be prevented by construction of roads in a wide scale.

## WHY 10 MILLIARD CROWNS FOR ROADS ?

The transport facilities rescued man from the misery of the middle ages and built for him the foundation of prosperity in a modern era.

During the middle ages man lived an immobile type of life. He did not know other dishes and dresses than those made only by his close neighbours. He lived and died without moving even once in his life from one place to another.

As such he was a slave of not only a strange type, but a bigger slave of his own superstition which kept him in complete darkness all through his life. During the middle ages man turned his activities to immovable properties: in building up castles, towers, cathedrals, pyramids, king's tombs.

After the invention of the steam engine man turned his activities to the things which give movement: built up railways, roads and, in the recent times, automobiles and aeroplanes. And capital thus invested led to improve life on earth to an immeasurable degree. We see that during the last 100 years due to the improved transport system the number of inhabitants in the western countries increased four-fold. Even in the most simple house of a modern man are found things which some-time ago was reserved only for the rich. Even the most simple man of to-day eats food from all parts of the world—the food that once was found only on the tables of the richest people (coffee, tea, fruits). The living and working places were immensely improved mostly of course in those countries which best solved the transport necessities of their inhabitants. The transport system rescued man from his primitive stage where all his necessities he had to procure himself. Transport made possible for him the organisation and specialisation of his work with all its beneficial effects: good and cheap products which everyone can consume. Movement and transport were the parents of all those lakhs of excellent machines of the modern man, because firstly people must have to know each other from different parts of the earth, know the necessities and possibilities and then devote themselves for the production of articles in demand in different places and thus contribute to the improvement of business.

When 100 years ago the courageous and hard working men began to invest their resources and capital for building up of railways, they were in comparison with to-day faced with great disadvantages. They did not know the results it would have, they had no examples before them, they did not know how transport might change the life of nations and diminish

poverty. They did not see, for instance, how capital invested in transport services creates big activities in every man as we see now from the examples of the Western countries and U.S.A. They did not know how railways change small craftsmen into industrialists, how cars and good roads make a peasant a self-conscious farmer. And still they were not afraid to invest their money for transport services because they realised the main spirit of undertaking and work. All that helps to increase and make life better, creates new values and this in the end must alone be profitable.

We see before our eyes the grand phenomenon of strong life and prosperity of the great nation of America. In places where 100 years ago there was not even a single railway line, we see to-day four million kilometers of best roads. We see how underground connections of pipes are leading apart the raw oil from the depth of the earth to the wagons and factories. And to the prosperity of the inhabitants of this country there are millions and millions of cars, while in our country only the rich can afford a car.

And this colossal transport power on and under the ground, on the water and in the air is drawing like a gigantic magnet new capitals creating new values new properties. If a motor car will save for its owner only 30 minutes a day and if 1 hour for an American is valued at 1 dollar, it means daily 12,000,000 dollars, and 360,000.000 dollars annually. Of course, it is too one-sided and just a trifling example of the importance and value of cars in the creation of national property.

It cannot be expressed in figures how travelling widens the knowledge of a man, how by travelling are gained and found new business opportunities and how from that experience new business and new factories rise up, thus giving more and more working possibilities for the people. If a man once, especially in young age, recognises the value of mechanical power he cannot imagine of finding his salvation by working with his hands. He will learn to use the power of his brain and will harness it to the service of people. He will try to give as much as he is capable of.

The American citizens were not afraid of gigantic inventions which were necessary for American transport services. And they always spent with pleasure their money for that, for instance, one-tenth of their income for cars, and  $1\frac{1}{4}$  million dollars ( $1\frac{1}{4}$  per cent of the national revenue) for roads. They know that money thus invested will bring the highest benefits.

Englishmen and other nations of the West are the same.

The road economics of nations which stand as masters of economic life show us the way how we should strive to come off the mud and dirt in which we are labouring on our roads. From this misery small endeavours will not help us out. Such attempts might mean only the district representatives losing their time by shouting and crying as to how to divide those few crowns, instead of a planned conference for the real solution of road and transport problems.

This great work which waits for our generation we can perform only by great actions. It is the problem of improving our roads, because to-day we are whiling away our most valuable property—time—on countless turnings and curves of our roads even in the plain regions, and are threatening the life and property of the pedestrians and our own as well.

It is the problem of hardening the surface of our roads, because the constant petty repairs that will be necessary otherwise will mean useless throwing away of money.

For such perfect outfit of our roads we must spend yearly at least as much as the Englishmen or Americans spend i.e.,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent of our national revenue, which is estimated at 75 milliard annually, i.e., at least 1 milliard crown yearly. The present estimate of our road development, which is calculated, with 1 milliard loan and income from taxes and customs, mostly at 2 milliards within the next ten years, is absolutely not sufficient. It might be sufficient only for the beginning of shouting and crying among the representatives of the different districts of our state.

It is about the solution of problems :

Financial—providing the necessary sums.

**Technical**—creating and building up of industry along with construction of roads.

**Trade**—to build up firstly roads in places from where money might come into our country, and thus create new capital and new values.

The most important problem is the problem of people. The problem is to find out such a method which will bring the highest income to the people and this should be sought after by the most sharp and expert men.

In the Czechoslovak people the capacity to pay for the real betterment of our roads is sufficient. I am sure and I expected from this work the outcome of a new big boom for creating new industries, which will do away with the increasing unemployment problems arising after the building and construction fevers of the last few years, and a great season for all of her industrial and agricultural crafts. I am sure that the network of good, perfect roads will be like a giant magnet and will bring into our land big values and thus lay the foundation of prosperity for all inhabitants.

## **THE TRANSPORT, THE ROAD AND THE PEOPLE**

**Speech from the year 1927**

The wheel, i.e. in transport has made of our children a different, better people and our children will make of us a different, better nation.

Before the invention of wheels it was difficult for a lad to go to the neighbouring villages. The old, popular songs give proof about it.

Don't walk, Johnny, through Polanka  
They will kill you for your galanka (girl)

Young lads from every village preserved their rights for the village girls and in consequence married amongst themselves only, some time even up to degeneracy, but always to the vegetate.

The wheels mixed with our life. They shortened the roads, approached the people. They give wings to our eternal desire for moving, travelling, knowing people and lands. And when man begins to use his brain instead of feet for moving the wheel, he invents the engine—the distance is no more an obstacle to him. But new obstacles were found—the problem of roads.

Our roads were constructed by people who had not the slightest idea of a cycle or car. They didn't take much trouble for measuring the roads. Usually the first engineer was the peasant and the roads were curved from tavern to tavern, and were planned up and down the hills without any reason. Such roads our fathers left for us. They always hinder our movement—the greater impediment to the betterment of an individual and the whole nation.

For the straightening of our roads, at least those most curved, we need in our republic at least two milliard crowns. The asphaltting will cost another eight milliards. The wheel—cycle—costs a few hallers and makes our men better. Is it possible to express in terms of money their beneficial effects upon man and consequently the whole nation?

If we had better roads, how quickly it would have improved our nation, how much better would have been its economic life and prosperity! Those ten milliards will be for our future generation, who will think of us as helpless people moving in mud and scraps undignified for human beings. Will those new people understand at all why we hesitated to free ourselves from that mud by constructing perfect roads? Why is there in us such little courage for leading a dignified human life, such little faith in our children and in man's ability?

In the times when in villages young men killed themselves for the girls, the scientific people sat down behind their tables and wrote heavy volumes about the ennobling of human generation. Their ideas creep in congress and meetings and come into law, but in real life only the moving wheels put those ideas

into action. People are such that things and actions change them better and more perfectly than most convincing words.

Rise up, every man—and our economic life will rise up itself.

And if for the ennobling of a man—nation—would be required the paving of our roads not by stones but even by gold, it would be necessary to do.

## MY ECONOMIC PHILOSOPHY

*In the year 1930 the International Chamber of Commerce asked Thomas Bata to express how he created his undertaking on such a scale. Thomas Bata replied by an article which was published in the No. 7th issue of the newspaper of International Chamber of Commerce, in French, English and other publications.*

You want me to tell you how I built our undertaking to its present greatness. I created men, more productive and better able to serve the customers, and those men created our undertaking.

I am convinced that the biggest losses in industry and trade begin from a wrong standpoint which a man has towards his work, his fellow-workers and his customers. The main task of the organiser who wants to build a great undertaking is to establish the moral and psychological basis on which his workers can successfully develop themselves.

Because there is no lesson book available in which all this could be explained, neither any tested or certified methods, I decided to create my own system which, as I hope, will be beneficial to mankind. This system can be called "Example".

Our undertaking started growing up in leaps and bounds from the time when our employees were ensured, from the open-to-all accounting system of our undertaking, that the undertaking gave a strong moral standpoint towards them and towards the customers. In the time when we were almost near our present working system, the economic situation in



Czechoslovakia was similar to that which is to-day in almost all the European countries. The deflation diplomacy of our state caused the figures of currency of exchange to rise up so much that it was not possible to sell even under the production price at home markets as well as abroad.

The majority of our undertakers found it more profitable to stop the production and transfer the care of the unemployed to the state.

I refused solution of the situation by this way, because I thought it cowardice. It was absolutely clear to me that such solution leads to the increase of prices, lowering of the standard of living. To strengthen the state economy I knew that somebody must dash to pieces that bewitching circle and I determined to take this task upon myself.

The situation in which we found ourselves was just the same as the situation of British and other shoe producers to-day. The British shoe-producer cannot sell his shoes to the Hindus, because they cannot sell their rice for such a price in the European market by which they could purchase English shoes.

The undertakers of those countries are producing expensively, because they are producing in small quantity and also because of the high price of their goods.

Now the question is, how to reduce the price of shoes produced that might be bought by Hindus.

Surely the price must be much lower than it is now. The undertakers of the Western countries must reduce the price :

1. Of the difference between the prices for which they previously purchased the materials in stock and the price for which those materials are saleable now in the Indian market.
2. Of the amount of which they must now pay higher taxes, because they are producing on a small scale.
3. Of the amount of which they have higher regie, because of low production.

4. Of the amount which they are losing in interest from capital due to the slow turnover of goods and money.

Many undertakers will come during these calculations to very interesting conclusions. It may be that in the end they find that their prices are too high. In this case the undertaker must investigate if those unnecessary large spendings have any basis on the employing of people who are superfluous and help only scientifically to increase the price. When saying this I have in mind firstly the keeping of organisations of different trustees, the task of which is only to maintain high prices. If their task is to keep in production only few undertakings for keeping the high prices, then they must be sentenced.

There are many branches of industry where half of the factories only are in work and those working factories guarantee those who are not working sure support to remain idle. This is the support of the employers to those who are actually without any work.

It is wrong to support unemployed workers in this way. Just as the employer, the employee must keep his calculation to level. Both must start from one moral principle—that only for the work done can pay be had and that work must be done with the spirit to serve as great a number of people as possible. Only by such a way the prices will go down to the demanded level and neither goods nor wages will go under the level of healthy, economical undertaking. So far as there is not enough work as it is now in many states, it is necessary even to work under the most unfavourable conditions, because only by that way can the preparation for better times be possible.

This standpoint I took in the year 1922, and my fellow-workers recognised that it was right. We reduced the price of products by 50 per cent and my fellow-workers accepted 40 per cent lower salaries. Their wages since that time have been increased more than double and our production increased ten times more and became first in the foreign markets.

We helped our fellow-workers (whose number increased ten times), we helped ourselves, we helped the state, but firstly we helped the customers.

If we had not taken these steps, our state would have had for many years an unfavourable trade balance, and consumption of shoes in our country would have been reduced to the level of the neighbouring states.

The task of industrial and trade undertaking is the search for new ways of enriching thousands and millions of people. This can be done only when every product will be produced in the place where the best and most favourable conditions for production are found.

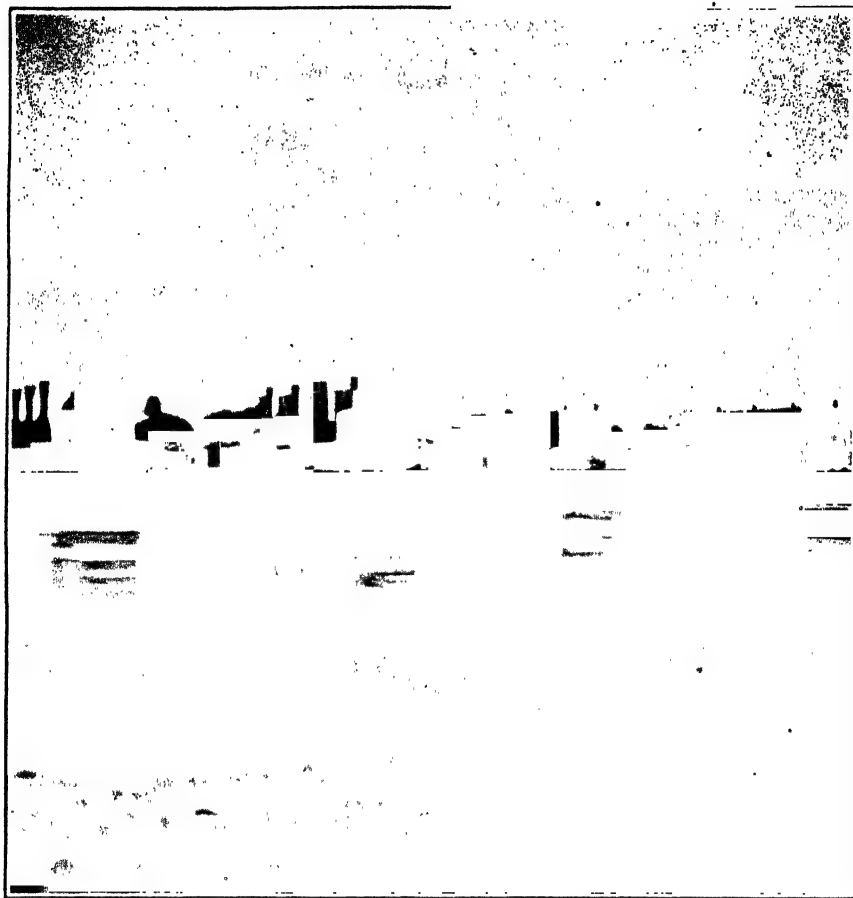
The European business and trade, searched from this point, will show a very unpleasant picture. The nations barricade themselves with export duties, try to kick away those other nations who succeed in surmounting these barricades and denounce them as national enemies. The result of this short-sighted diplomacy from the leather and shoe-industry point of view is that to-day one million people are walking barefooted. The same is also the case in other branches of industry and it is not strange that the world is looking at Europe, which once was the pioneer of world's culture and civilisation, as on the land which is violently pushed backward.

It cannot be denied that the power of American industry and richness of Americans are due only to the fact that America created a huge market without any artificial barricades.

It is not military power which gives to Britons and Americans the supremacy over the world, but also the ability of serving the public, which they are able to do and which they are doing to other nations.

The duty of different European countries, the cradle of industry and trade, is to produce and sell and not to build deep trenches between the different nations in the form of high custom tariffs and thus breaking the business undertaking.





Arrangement of the best possible living facilities for the employees and their families is one of the most important objects of the Bata enterprise at Batanagar, because only the satisfaction of workers living in happy surroundings in the midst of their families in decent houses constructed according to the demands of the twentieth century, can stand guarantee for smooth work and development of the whole enterprise.

In the picture is seen a part of the Batanagar living colonies for the married employees.

Since the beginning of printing of this book, the tank in the foreground of this picture has been turned into a new living colony amongst gardens and flower-beds.

The great European countries need men who are not afraid of the indignation of undertakers who calculate that they will lose part of their capital, neither the anger of millions of workers who will have to satisfy themselves for some time with less pay. This is the only solution for creating the healthy economic situation of states, for reduction of prices, increasing of wages and it will not only enrich the private undertaking but will bring benefit to all Europe, nay, all mankind.

## **FRIENDSHIP IN DUTCHLAND AND IN OUR COUNTRY**

**Speech from the year 1924**

In this country it is possible to learn something new in every visit. During my last visit I noticed the excellent fruit of Dutch culture—friendship. One Saturday evening I found in all our shops many new employees. When I pointed out to one of our Dutch shopmanagers and asked why so many people were there, he smiled and explained that they were not his employees, but his friends who come on Saturday evenings to help him.

This help is not as it is in our land where one goes to help his friend when he offers some liquor. In Dutchland where there is the biggest rush on Saturdays in our shops, the friends help the shopmanagers purely out of their friendly relation. In Rotterdam I found amongst the friends of our shopmanagers one gentleman who closed his own shop at 6 p.m. and came to help his friend.

In our town I saw other kinds of friendship. I have seen our shopmanager sitting idle and smoking with his friend. I asked if he was a customer. The wavering reply was "Yes." But I came to know later that this man was a small customer, but a big friend. Every free moment—and he had more free than busy moments—he used to come and sit down in the office of our shopmanager, smoke cigarettes, accompanied him in his travels and, in short, spent more time in our shop than in his home. This friend had no special knowledge or

ability and this intense friendship was thus in no way conducive to our shopmanager. Always smoking and indulging in useless talks he was never seen to do anything useful, he was not seen helping his friend even in the biggest rush in the shop.

This kind of friend takes much and gives nothing. If he takes nothing else, at least he takes up some valuable time. The intelligent shopmanager knows that by losing time he loses the most valuable thing, because it is said "time is money." Modern men value this slogan more than anything, because they must see their whole life in the short time. It is not a good principle for the businessman to make friends of people who are not businessmen. The life of a clerk or officer employed only for a few hours a day is much different from the life of a businessman. If a businessman allows himself to be tied to the man who is employed only one-third of the day, he must then take out that period from his own time. It is only natural that business must suffer for this.

I was living for a few years in one town where many businessmen and undertakers lived, but all of whom were Jews. From our people, Christians, every year somebody tried to begin some business or factory, but most of them after two-three years were taking up insolvency. I searched for the reason of this. Such a businessman or undertaker wants to come to the same level as aristocrats and nobles in the course of a few days. It is flattering to him that they accept him in their midst and thus recognise his intelligence. The idea of these men was that intelligent men must be sitting with glasses of beer, often go to picnics and hunting, must talk nice things and jokes and stories which have nothing in common with the life of a businessman. This has consequently ruined many a businessman, because it has led him away from business and business considerations.

The Jews are much better. They come together only among themselves, also only between themselves they find and keep friendship. Every minute in their company brings

some benefit to one or the other, because they talk mostly about business, and everyone might learn from his business colleague something new which he might use in his own business with benefit.

Our businessmen, who contract intimate friendship with clerks and officers or with unsuccessful businessmen who are pasting themselves on the heels of those men or allow such men to be pasted on their heels, betray that amusement and distraction of mind is more pleasant for them than success in business. They do not love their work. For those people the time is not far away when their work will not love them and thus will not provide them with a livelihood.

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EDUCATOR



*If a single man teaches thousands of his neighbours and citizens such system of work and life that even in the most unfavourable conditions they can march ahead while competing with all the world, it is surely the best proof of his unusual educational imparting abilities.*

*The whole life of Thomas Bata was continuous learning and building up of character of his own and others. He was not a pleasant teacher for himself neither for others. His system of education could be compared with the work of a sculptor who by powerful strokes of chisel and hammer on the stone creates the required face of a statue. And if a lump of clay comes to his hands, he shapes and heats it in the furnace in such a way that even the clay becomes harder, ennobled and more reliable.*

*His innumerable decisions lead people to begin at the roots of matters, to turn back to things long investigated and explained in books. Those decisions were based on the ideal that work is an opportunity for learning. He trained from simple people to highly educated personalities in such a way that the knowledge they gained increased their self-confidence and self-consciousness and will for action. Thus he changed his factory into something similar to a huge human university, or better to say, a huge research laboratory. Everyone might get here as much knowledge as he was able to gather and the organization tried to convert that knowledge into money because they prove that it is useful knowledge which serves somebody in such a way that he is able to pay for it.*

*Besides the education of mature people Thomas Bata turned his attention in his older age more and more to the education of children and youth. Because he looked upon life as a continuously flowing stream, he tried to bring school nearer the real life and life nearer the school. In Zlin the school was turned into the streets, and workshops and houses came to the school. Between the pupils, teachers, parents and public grew a living contact continuously strengthened by daily educational work which brought the whole town to one group. It was not a singularity in the standpoint, but a singularity in searching: The singularity in the view that every head has a right to learn according to its desire, to blossom all talents, but also has an obligation to be useful for itself and for others.*

*As a pupil and also as a teacher Thomas Bata expressed his educational standpoints in slogans simple in words, effective, but difficult in their realisation: As a teacher: "Be an example." As a pupil: "Try and do."*

## THE AIM OF SCHOOLS

*The speech of Thomas Bata during the visit of the late Czecho-Slovak President Thomas Garrigue Masaryk in Zlin in the year 1928, before the opening of the Masaryk Schools, which Thomas Bata himself built up and gave to his town.*

Mr. President,

I thank you on behalf of all my fellow-workers for the great honour you have done us by your visit.

From almost nothing our undertaking has grown up to its present stage by our continuous effort for all-sided progress and betterment.

To prevent the loss of these experiences gained in this hard, pioneering work, we want to use them in our schools for our youths and our future generations.

Because of great significance of this school for industrial expansion, we ask, Mr. President, your permission to name it after you which is and will remain the symbol of progress.

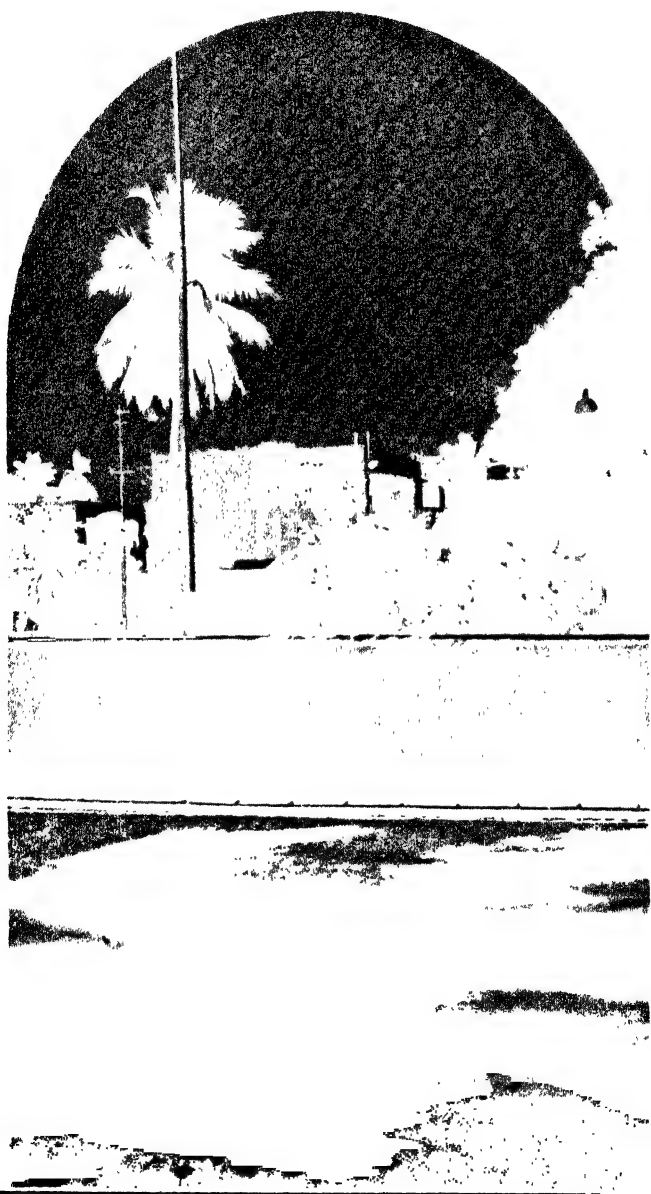
In this school we want to educate efficient men for whose progress you always exerted your educational activities, the men for whom work is a pleasure and a moral duty ! The pioneer who finds his happiness in the perfection of his deal and in service to his fellow-countrymen—service to the public. We want to cultivate in these young people the belief in man, belief in work—that belief which created this our workshop.

This school should connect the school room with the workshop. It should show how it is possible to do the work and train the mind and how science can transfer efforts to bread.



This is one of the streets of Batanagar





Colony of Batanagar from the Arcade of the Club House.

By our work we solve the problem of how a man may realise the dignity of labour, how to make work a pleasure ! How to make possible for a man to gain during 8 hours enough for a decent living for himself and his family.

If our workshop you will find, Mr. President, what a good helper is the machine in this our effort. You will find that everyone of us has at his disposal an electrical robot. We esteem it as our biggest success that this robot does the work without our help which in the past hung heavy on the hands of our forefathers.

To this power we are grateful. Although this our district is denied by nature any minerals, agricultural or other property as other districts have, still we offer better life to the inhabitants and we believe that in the near future we may gain by our work such a standard of living of which we may be proud before all the world.

This and our common belief in ourselves we think that our work is victoriously competing in the markets in all parts of the world.

We are happy that in this gentleman's contest with the most developed nations we are also gaining a good name for our country which you, Mr. President, have obtained for us by your life's struggle.

In the midst of the work we express our most arduous common wish :

Remain amongst us, Mr. President, for many, many more years !

## THE SENSE OF TEACHING

*From the annual reports from Masaryk's Experimental Schools in Zlín.*

### I.—Year 1930

If we wish to perform in life great work we must find the way that make great men. Small man—small work, great man—great work.



We, in Zlin, want to do great work not only for ourselves, but for all the world. All the world works for us and it is our duty to work for all the world. Nobody among us invented the electric motor, and still that motor increased the well-being of all of us. We are using the work of others—may be of the men of the other part of the globe—so we feel it our duty, if not directly at least indirectly, to recompense them by our work for the people.

From small men can be made great men only by education. The younger a man, the easier is the education imparted. We want to teach our children in such a way that they should not be only pupils, but even our teachers. It is, after all, nothing new. I remember that as a boy I taught my father to write in Latin characters, because he learnt in the school only "swabach" (old script of German origin).

I wish to gain every day some knowledge which my son learns from the school. Thus we build schools not only for our children, but schools from where we ourselves can gain knowledge and by which we could make our life better, nicer and more pleasant.

Every coin which we spend for the erection of the school will return to us many times more in life, not only in various moral enjoyments, but also in increased welfare which we shall derive from it.

I calculate that nobody is able to produce physical work worth more than three crowns, if we compare manual work with the work of the powerhouse, but the measure of spiritual output is unlimited, because one single man can do spiritual work worth millions of crowns. High wages can be reached only by human intelligence. To increase this worth in ourselves means the increasing of the fountain of our income, increasing our abilities of income and thus subscribe by the biggest measure for the common prosperity.

## **II.—Year 1931**

Every man has powers and abilities to do independent and useful work. Some have more of them and some less.

But everyone must always awake them and train them if he wants in life to perform great things beneficial to all. Those powers and abilities for great work should be developed from an early age.

The strongest side of my personality is my education. My father always laid great emphasis on independence and I had also a teacher who did the same.

It is the duty of every father to make every effort to cultivate in his son those moral values even if he loses great sums in realising this or in the result of his work. If a father teaches his 6 years old son how to earn two crowns honestly and independently, it is more valuable than he himself earning 200 crowns.

Only then will our young lads know how to gain rightly and spend rightly their own money, this style of living will lead to economic as well as political independence.

### III.—Year 1932

When I was going to school I always had conflicts with my teacher and also with my father. I always asked them why I should learn such things which they forced me to do.

All that people learn should have some aim, should serve some purpose. Education should come from its astral spheres down to the people. It is necessary to speak and to teach the work which is done in the neighbourhood, in the atmosphere of which the pupils live.

The pupils should take to the accounts department of some undertaking to learn accounting and figure works.

The natural science should be learnt on the earth, in the garden, in the forests, and lectures should not be limited to trees alone but also about their productivity. Geography should be learnt from the point of certain branches but specially from the point of the particular district. Let it be based on the knowledge that every district of the world can serve them and they can serve by their work all the world. History should be applied to the present time and the past things to

be compared as a lesson for the present. Let all the negatives be taken out. Let us not speak for two hours that a certain wood is not useful for a certain thing. Let us speak and teach positively about things !

## EDUCATION IN ATTEMPTING AND ECONOMISING

*Thomas Bata meditated most about the education of economical thinking and the art of economy.*

*He was convinced that economical meditation and activity must grow together in the innermost minds of people, that it should be for him such a simple thing as the ability to walk and speak. Therefore, he demanded that this ability should be created and developed in the child from his early age. His intention about organisation of economical education of children is expressed in two of his expressions published below, and his orders about economical education of young men I publish in almost the same words as Thomas Bata said them to me:*

*Education should be based on the system of life which the pupils are living at their homes and should be concentrated to the betterment of that life. I had seen in one of our village schools children learning how to calculate the cubit measure of a cone.*

*With the permission of the teacher I came to the first boy and asked him," "What did you eat at yesterday's dinner" "Potatoes and cabbage," he replied. "And you?" I asked another, "Potatoes and cabbage." Except two or three boys in the class all the boys eat all the week nothing but potatoes and cabbages. It is in the districts where common people live on wood-cutting, stone-breaking and pasture of cattle. Poor mountainous district! People do not know how to calculate the cubit measure of wood which they cut, and in counting of their wages they entirely depend on the calculation of the clerks from whom they receive wages.*

*Not a single housewife knows the percentage of butter present in the milk of her cows or goats, and she does not know which of the cows or goats give her more and better milk. What blessing would come to that village, if the pupils would learn daily to count for their father and mother the figures on which depend their livelihood,*

*instead of counting things for which they have not practical understanding! I am sure that the children of those children shall have surely better dinner than potatoes and cabbages.*

*Or:*

*“Have you noticed in what order or, better to say, disorder, the people have their own household accounting? If a father or mother wants to find some receipt or bill he or she must run and look all over the beds, almirahs, drawers, and usually finds everything else than what just was wanted. Then they pay bills even twice. Have you noticed in what a bad way the people have their own tax-paying matters? Nobody understands them and nobody knows if he has paid his taxes or not. And have you ever seen any family which has a list of all the properties annually made? It is said that our people are very poor, that we lack in well-being. But does the well-being or prosperity come just only by chance, without thinking and without work? Surely not.*

*Imagine, what school can do in that matter. The children learn mathematics and accounting, they count transport rates from Hamburg to Buenos Aires and God knows what not! None of them has a personal relation to it, but takes it only as a task. If a 10 years old boy could only come to his father and say: “In school we just learn how to make a home accounting! Let us make an agreement that I will do for you all home accounting and you will pay me for it a certain amount.” Then the family will know all about their earnings, spendings and all about their livelihood. And the schools would have always so much to teach, because life does not stand still.*

*How does the study of higher mathematics help you, if you have always empty pockets?”*

*And here is the third.*

*“Divide the school garden among all the school children. Give each of them a small plot of land, one or two square metres, and tell them that they are personally and fully responsible for the land, that all that will grow in the land will be their own property. Let the child sow, take care of the growth, reap the harvest and sell it in the market alone. Let him write the income and expenditure which he has come about with that piece of land, its cultivation, etc.*

*Give them advice as to how to try and do the work and how to mention it on paper. Not one child is so incapable as not to learn by this system how to gain a better livelihood."*

*Did Thomas Bata demand such school from materialistic points of view?*

*Certainly not. He demanded it as an economist who looked into the struggle for existence as the very foundation for thousands of people, he found their inability and saw how for this inability people are floated down like leaves in the wind. He saw that without a strong economical basis creative work cannot be accomplished, that a man who lives from day to day only has not enough strength to endure the shocks which life puts on him and, especially, has no courage for enterprising. He saw that from a family on such weak foundation cannot grow up a great man. He knew only one way for the betterment of the human society: betterment of human being and that it should begin at schools.*

## REMARKS ON SCHOOL REFORM

### **Speech for the teacher's conference in Brno in 1929.**

Our schools are suffering from want of good teachers having good income. Not all people want to compete and reach the goal of perfection. The right competition needs the perfect carrying expedients. And those unusual expedients can be provided by the teacher, as by any other man, only for the price which he gains by competing.

The state schools are not good enough for such competition. The best for it is the private school which is managed by the teacher on his own risk. Also in all states there are, private schools which walk in the forehead of pedagogical progress.

Of course, somebody must pay the high price for the teacher who gains in teaching the biggest success. And that somebody is and must be the father. Our fathers, even those richer, are agreeable to pay for the education of their child

4081 crowns annually, while the perfect education in the college with the best teachers and best pedagogical help costs about 40,000 crowns annually.

People with enthusiasm will be competing in all branches of human work if victory will bring success not only for others, but also for them. But in our country the victory of teachers does not bring them any benefit at all. According to the law, only those teachers can get the highest income who have attained high age and not those who have reached by their work the best results.

The progress of schooling will not be attained in our country if we will not have at least a few teachers who from their profession could become rich, become millionaires, and who could get everything they need for their study and scientific progress from their own properties and not from properties borrowed.

The progress of educational science depends on the same basis as the progress of arts. There can be no great painters, if there are no great admirers of painting who are ready to spend good money to buy good pictures. We cannot have a great educational science so long as we have no fathers who are ready to find out great teachers and pay them for their unusual work unusual rewards, as is done in the private schools in other nations where the rate for one pupil is as many thousands as our fathers agree to pay in crowns.

The progress reached by contest of teachers managing private schools on their own risks, gives also benefit to the pupils of state schools in the same way as the printed copies of excellent paintings come to the benefit of all inhabitants by the help of the printing machine.

In Frankfurt I once met an Englishman, father of a young lad. I asked him why he sent his son to school in England when he himself was living in Frankfurt. "I think German schooling is good," said the Englishman, "but vainly I tried to find here a teacher who by teaching has gained a large property. My son will be an enterpriser; he should create values. I am sure that

the teacher even with the best education, will not be able to teach my son to create properties if he himself had not gained any experience about it."

The proof of that is firstly in our arithmetic books. The teacher gives to the class a task—how much is five multiplied by five? One pupil solves the problem and all the class is shouting after him: "Five multiplied by five is twenty-five."

It is collective education. It is the cheapest education worth just only those 40·81 crowns a year. Such teaching of mathematics is killing the mathematical sense of the children. Not by spiritless recitation of multiplication tables, but by mathematical thinking the school should learn. Even a four year old child knows how to count the number of ducks his mother has. And from those ducks, from hoppers and pence saved, from figures, which are in the mind of the child and are in constant touch with his life, should the teacher begin teaching.

Once I visited a small village in the Valach mountains where a teacher dictated from the text-book the following text:—

From 58 tons of potatoes 110·754 kg. of starch was produced in the starch factory. What is the percentage of starch in the potatoes?

The fractions used in this text render the solution difficult even for a grown up man. Therefore, even the best pupil failed in working out the sum on the black-board. For all the class this task was a torment rather than a pleasure.

I waited till the end and asked the headmaster where the nearest starch factory was situated. He replied that there was no starch factory and that potatoes produced in this district were not sufficient even for ordinary consumption. Later I spoke with other teachers of that district, and then the headmaster told me a good joke. Not only the pupils solving this task made mistakes in decimal points, but the author of that text-book made a mistake of two decimals, because he gives the figure of quantity of starch in potatoes hundred times smaller than it actually is.

We came to the conclusion on this occasion how beneficial it might be for all this district if instead of putting tasks about starch and all that, the teacher would give tasks from real life to the children. For example: What is the percentage of butter in milk if from 28 litres of milk mother made one litre of butter? The village lives in producing milk and butter. The children would not only with pleasure and understanding learn things at school, but even at home they could discuss them. And on the next occasion when mother again weighs butter, they surely would come to the teacher with the news that their milk gave so much more or less butter than they calculated at the school. And there would not be hundreds of mistakes even by the worst boy and the lectures would be listened to with the greatest interest and pleasure. By such education not only would the children benefit but also the parents, because this schooling would bring them knowledge which they need for their daily life. It would increase their earning abilities and build friendship between the school and the family.

## **SAVINGS—ECONOMICS**

### **Speech from the year 1925**

Dear Pupils,

The saving bank, founded by our undertaking for you, should make saving easier for you and reward you by paying high interest. But the economic success is not based on savings. Saving in itself occupies the third place.

The first place belongs to the earning, second is reasonable spending and the third is saving.

None of you are so small as to have no possibility of earning. On my tours through rich and highly cultured countries, I found young boys earning lots of money and thus by their own effort they became almost rich.

I saw, for instance, a nine-year-old boy who by selling newspapers earned nearly one dollar daily.

He had very rich parents and all his earning was his to save.



Another boy offered his services to a businessman and took the job of posting his letters. Because he was reliable and punctual, other inhabitants of the house gave him the same work, and later he extended his service to the whole street. He served the people and, therefore, was rewarded. Another boy on the countryside offered himself to rid plants of caterpillars. As he was smart he also gained much. The one I liked most was the boy who engaged himself in houses in destroying mosquitoes.

All those boys showed in their work their pleasure.

The property—it is the difference between income and expenses.

Earn money ! Don't beg ! Don't receive gifts from your relatives ! Be proud of your honour and respect it more than money !

Spend money after careful consideration ! Even if you think that the spending is unavoidable take advice from old people—best from your parents and teachers !

By saving you create your independence.

The day-labourer who has some saving is more independent than the farmer or factory director who is head and ears in debt.

All those boys, of whom I spoke to you, once will become successful men. In young age they gained more experiences in earning and spending money, in regulating their lives than many university students who by their own effort never gained anything and who spend only other people's money. It will be difficult for them to rise in old age—those men who started twenty years later.

## **PROPERTY AND KNOWLEDGE**

**Speech from the year 1931**

My Young Friends !

The schools which we build for you have, firstly, got the task to teach you the art of earning more money in less toil than your parents did,

Begin learning this art just now. Even the youngest of you should be the owner of some property, should economise in the use of the property which you earned.

Earn by service to the people. Do not accept unearned presents. We all have a duty to give opportunity for earning to the youths. One of such things is the selling of unusable things in the house.

Therefore, on Saturday next we will begin in our warehouse the purchase of old paper, old dresses, old rubber shoes, old iron, glass, etc.

In this way we give you an opportunity to help your parents in cleaning your house of waste materials, to test your mathematical knowledge and help you start your business and increase property.

Be proud of the property which you gain by your own honest work. But do not save money on gaining new knowledge !

## **TO THE MACHINERY APPRENTICES**

**In the beginning of teaching of the trade school in Zlin.**

I welcome you as future representatives of heavy industries in this newly established special mechanical school which should give you theoretical knowledge as much as possible. The main school is the workshop, but when the practical knowledge, which you gain there, will be completed by theoretical ones, then only will you become perfect mechanics. Many of you do not imagine how important this school is for you. The days are very difficult now and if our industry should be productive and able to stand world competition, it needs firstly the right type of men, fully armed with experience and knowledge. Therefore, try to gain both of them in the biggest measure. We give you able teachers, experts, specialists. Try to make the best use of them. Do not search for their mistakes—if they have any—but try to learn from them and gain their preferences. Do not work and deal as you see some pupils from other schools do, who know about every mistake

of their teachers. I have had a fellow-student who was really excellent on this point. After many years I met him on my way back from America. He was not very enthusiastic about it. He knew all the deficiencies and shortcomings of the people there, but knew nothing about their good and beneficial sides. From America I came away with only good knowledge and experience. From **those good points I learnt much, and he from the bad ones nothing.** And therefore, do not be as he was.

Such a man, if he is not able or does not want to free himself from this bad habit, is not beneficial to anybody. If somebody notices only defects and pettiness he can have no time for his own important and needful things.

Take an example from the life of our president Masaryk. He also comes from your ranks. Try to be like him. It depends only upon you, future men, to build your machine according to the demands of time, and work rightly and conscientiously. The good machine is the executor of work in this time. Look to the past. In the old ages one used to get work done by slaves. The middle ages replaced the slaves by horses, and the modern times by machines. Many of you know that in our power house one small machine does the work of 3,000 horses. To create such modern horses—machines—is and will be your task.

Therefore, I put it to you. Take kindly to your craft ! Do your work with love. Do not believe that work is blasting your life. Have in your mind that it is your duty to build by work the prosperity for yourselves and for your neighbours. Be strong in doing your task and success will not slip out of your hands.

## **THE EVENING TRADE SCHOOL**

**To the listeners of evening courses, managed by the factory in the year 1924.**

Personally I think that evening courses on trade are more useful than the trade academy. For the trade and industrial schools are not unlike the examples of high schools.

A man in business or industry needs for his existence firstly the capacity to find out or discover new ways and means which he cannot learn in any school. The school's aim is to teach all what people have invented and made in the past. But only the study of those things of the past is not sufficient for the management of factory or business. The businessman or producer must be endowed with the abilities of observation and invention and mainly the appraisal of the future if he is to be able to satisfy his mission and create economical values.

Powers of observation and invention can be attained only from real life. The present type of schools do not train these faculties. On the contrary, they rather suppress them. But it is necessary to gain these abilities in young age when the brain of a man is rather plastic and can be easily moulded. The young man who has never worked or earned for himself in consequence of being supported by his parents up to maturity, on entering a business or trade firm will be at a disadvantage against another lad of his own age who has had practical experience.

Our undertaking gives the idea for starting this school for the reason that youths from business can gain here everything that they need for completing their practical education. We hope that visitors and pupils of these evening courses will let us have reason to be proud of the results and the system of education we have introduced, and that by their actions in life and their service to the public they confirm the truth of my words which I said about the object of this school.

## **THE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS**

**Manifestoes from the year 1924, published in the "Trades Review."**

I am sure that my drawing a parallel between the trade academy and the evening trade school (I did not mean courses) has started a debate and I should be glad if you would publish in your esteemed journal my contribution to that debate.

It is encouraging that the writer of your previous article has the same opinion—that the academy of trade should be reformed. I also agree with him completely that theoretical trade knowledge is useful in business as in any other human craft and makes it easier to adapt it to real life.

Of trade academies I feel the only thing not good about them is that theoretical knowledge imparted by them makes the listeners incapable of building in themselves the abilities which are more necessary for future businessmen.

The present life of the students of trade academies is not different from the life of students from high schools and still the life for which these students are educated is entirely different from the life of priests, professors, lawyers and others. For the businessman is to lead a heavy, hard life. His day begins earlier and ends much later than the day of other people coming from high schools. The day of a businessman means struggle with time.

This hard, heavy life will not suit the habits of those men who begin at the age of 22.

Therefore, when we look upon the graduates of trade academies, we find them mostly in the state service, in banks, in huge industrial limited companies. Only a very small fraction of them take to business and undertaking, although they are educated for business.

We have many Czech towns where Czech producers or Czech businessmen did not succeed only because they tried to imitate the lives of officers leading the society of that place.

It is difficult to find how young people should be educated for becoming undertakers, either independent or associated in bigger associations. In any case, it would be necessary for the directorate of trade academies to harmonise the life of their pupils with those youngsters who are working and learning in practice and to harmonise their life with the life of future businessmen.

Then it will be clear that a vacation for two months, and if we count Christmas and other holidays which make a total of three months, is absolutely useless for young men of 16 or 18 and absolutely not in keeping with the life for which they are trained.

The job of a practical businessman is about the same as that of a rope-dancer. Let us teach the rope-dancer the theory of balancing and the law of gravity and let us send him in his twenty-second year to earn his bread by rope-dancing. We will find that two things will stand as obstacles to him—(1) old limbs, and (2) that he will be afraid of exposing his limbs to such a danger.

The aim of the business academy is to teach the students to create values by honest work. It is entirely a different aim from any other academy or high school. Therefore, the students of business academies must have entirely different lives to students of other schools or colleges.

To the business academy it must be clear that even a seven year old boy must start to learn in practice to create values—to earn money, if he should be successful in his life. Just the same as we observe in the children of not only businessmen but advocates, professors and others of the western countries. The twenty-two year old graduate of a business academy should get the worst classification for his knowledge if he only proves that till now he had not gained any property, that till now he spent his holidays for his "recreation" and lived only on the work of his parents.

## **CONSTRUCTIONS, SCHOOLINGS AND LODGINGS**

### **Speech from 1931.**

During the construction of our warehouses, which we have just completed, we met with the resistance of great prejudices and superstitions of our constructing experts—theoreticians. One of these was about the inside arrangements of new houses from the point of view of health.

We looked to the building department for help from the old practical experts to make for us those inside arrangements which would suit our needs. But in those men we found such

a lack of theoretical knowledge in making the estimates, calculations, drawings of sketches that is deplorable. They were not even able to start the work for their want of knowledge.

Every man should acquire at the school at least the most necessary knowledge of how to express his ideas in figures and sketches. Who is to be blamed if they do not know it till now? Why are the practical experts who masterly wield the hammer, saw or joiner absolutely helpless when they are asked to express their work by pencil and figures on paper ?

I immediately visited our industrial school. This school has everything that is needed. Gladly we give it every help, financial or otherwise, so that it does not have to face difficulties during schooling.

By a visit to the building, apprentices' class, I found that they were having a lesson on colonnade of Greek style pillars. But I noticed that the same day the same students failed to calculate and make drawings of lavatory tubes. When I pointed it out to the teacher we both agreed that the solution of that problem was far more useful in life than the knowledge of Greek style pillars.

I pointed out that most of the fires occurred in our country due to the chimneys with incorrect measurements. In these lands where children in school are learning to calculate right position and measurements of chimneys, it is absolutely impossible for the architect to construct a chimney which would be a source of danger, because his mistake would be noticed by every pupil, who would immediately tell his mother why their chimney is bad and why it smokes so heavily.

In our architecture and in the demands which we put to the houses there are so many middle-age-superstitions that only new schools which educate the present young generation may change the situation. Every man, every family, not living in the city, should have a house which gives him healthy living according to the demands of modern life. It should be a house that can be built for the annual income of the occupants.

Moreover, we build our houses so as to last 500 years and inconvenience the future generations in the same way as the houses built by our ancestors put us to difficulties.

It is natural that the house which should last 500 years cost more than a man's earning capacity in twenty years. Therefore, most of the nation in its best time, and in time when children are being educated, is living in gaps. And who can liberate them from those gaps? Only they themselves and such schools where they will learn to construct hygienic closets and bathrooms not only for the few rich, but for all classes of people.

## SCHOOL FOR YOUNG MEN

*No organisation of the world can guarantee the future of any enterprise, if its old experienced people will not share their experiences with the young ones.*

*People well understood this principle even in the middle ages. The crafts and business of that time were organised into guilds, which had thoroughly arranged the education of young people and apprentices to whom was handed down the craft's knowledge from generation to generation.*

*The industry, alas, had left those most important parts of life—teaching and education—to chance. Nobody takes care of the young man who enters the factory. He comes, and gets some simple work and is left to his own resources. If he wishes to learn skilled work on the machines he has to do it in his off-time and in the absence of his wont-teach elders. The educational influence of school or home does not help him at all. At the time of most vehement development of his body and soul this young man is left isolated without care, advice and guidance from his elders.*

*From such disorganised conditions suffer most, of course, the industry and the people working in it. They suffer because they do not understand. How the man, working behind the machine could understand all the complicated processes of work of the factory if in young age he did not learn accountancy special mathematics, business*



*and trade science etc.? And how the management of a factory can expect from its people understanding and sound advices, if it did not take care of their education while they were young?*

*Bata took up the education of the youth by a system which is original. When he recognised against what difficulties must the factory fight into which come people who do not understand its work and spirit of that work and how low will be the earning of the man without certain education, he founded the three-year special school for young men of 14-17 years of age. Those boys selected from all groups of inhabitants not only do not pay for their education, but must not take even from their homes any financial or other help. Below we publish the fundamental elements of ideas of that school, as was expressed in the speeches of Thomas Bata. From India over 20 boys got education in that school. Majority of them now hold responsible positions in Batanagar, and those who left Batas, although young, have become leading personalities in the craft and society of the places they live in.*

## **THE NEW EDUCATION**

*Before the opening of the Bata school for young men, which now-a-days is famous all over the world, Thomas Bata delivered the following speech before the young boys of Czechoslovak Republic.*

The word "man" means "bread-winner." A boy of fourteen begins earning to support himself and, therefore, he is a young man. This does not apply always to boys from richer families, because they at their fourteen years are not at work and do not earn. Really rich parents are very few in our country. It is the young boys who wrongly think of themselves as being members of rich families. But let us hope that they are not many and as such there is no need to speak of them.

**YOU, YOUNG MEN, STEP WITH COURAGE INTO THE WORLD!** Don't feel sorry that your parents cannot or do not want to support your desire for higher studies. The whole world is a school and the best teacher is work, the best helper is indigence. The majority of prominent men of our country and our time left their paternal roofs with a bundle just as small as you have now. The great virtue of our time is that even

the highest posts in our Republic can be obtained by poor men. It depends only on them, on their abilities and the perseverance to reach them.

For your craft choose a free profession, it means agriculture, business, industry. Only in a free profession can be fully expanded the life of human beings. The power of the body and soul—be your slogan. Call on fight! Do not be afraid of wounds! Do not weaken your body by vices such as drinking, smoking, etc. Vice is the master of defeat. Virtue and temperance lead on to the way for victory.

Cheers to you, young men!

## **TO THE YOUNG MEN**

### **Before the Selection of Their Profession**

You are just at the point of selecting your profession. Choose industry or business. The reasonable government of the state promises great future of our industry and trade. Do not be afraid of failure. Do not be afraid of those failures of which papers are almost daily reporting. They only show one aspect of the great fight in our economical life, and where there is fight there are injuries and death, but where there is fight, there is also your place. Only by struggle will you make real men of yourselves.

From every corner they are telling you: "Do not come here, it is over-crowded", and they are right, e.g., in state services, and that is why there are such low wages. Do not think that if you are a graduate of some college or school, the state should care more for your existence. The posts of teachers and all other small-range clerical jobs are left to women and people of weak calibre. You fill up the big spaces in industry and trade of our land! Do not be afraid of low incomes at the beginning. Gain experience in well-managed undertakings and then you can ask for your wages. The businessman or business-attendant who knows something earns only enough for livelihood, but those who know a little more earn five times more. When you will become leading personalities or representatives in foreign countries, you will

have the consciousness that you are widening by your work the sale of the products of your labours and thus indirectly helping the increase of their income.

You, who have not sufficient courage to pick up your future employment in this great but healthy business family, go little further into the world and look around yourself ! The sea can give you the best example. Travel round the earth and you cannot see your countrymen amongst those thousands of businessmen. You would see in England, France, Denmark the new, great towns which provide a much bigger measure of well-being than you find in your country. These towns and their prosperity contribute to the growth and prosperity of business and industry.

## YOUNG MEN

**Thomas Bata to the young men of Bata school of work in the celebrations in 1925.**

You are a band of unique men in our Republic. There are of course boys of your age—14-15 years—who during their education earn money. But they are still children. They are living with their parents to whom they give their earning and who provide them with their livelihood. About their economic affairs, about life's necessities their mothers take care.

I said that the word "man" meant "bread-winner." Man's task is a hard and noble one.

The main reasons of misery are found in the hearts of men. Where a man from the common plate of obligation takes the biggest portion for himself and from the plate of rights the smallest one, there is also the end of misery.

If a man should do his task rightly he must have the ability to "think economically." But our men do not know about economic thinking, because they never learn to do it. Up to the time when they laid the foundation for their own households, the care of their economic affairs rested on their mothers whose motherly love sheltered them from troubles and anxiety of monetary affairs and thus deprived them of the opportunity of

thinking for themselves. And now when they should fill up their duty and take up their tasks in the newly founded family, just out of habit they leave the economic troubles to their wives in the same way as they left things to their mothers.

In our families there is much of communism. The more we travel towards the east, the more we find it. I saw in one of the eastern countries a 50 year old man humbly asking his 80 years old father—head of the family—for money, which he (son) gained and which he needed for his family. And when he got it, he kissed the hand of his father.

In the western countries it is not like that. As for example in England. There the father does not think that his 6 year old boy is too young to have the right and ability to handle his own property.

To have ability of economical thinking, we must start in good time. The age of 24 is too late. At that time the brain gets different reflections and is surely in great disadvantages, and so will surely be surpassed by those who started at 6 or even at 14. Those men who would save money by curtailing the family's expenses for livelihood and education would be doing it badly.

The property educates and so does economy. By economy I do not mean only saving of money. Saving is only a part of economy and comes to the third place. The first place is occupied by the knowledge of earning, second is reasonable spending and the third one is saving.

Of course, if it is right and the duty of a young man to own property and to economise in things which he himself earned, it does not mean that money should be his highest ideal, his only ambition and the most valuable property. "Life is more than food," says the Bible. The mutual love of parents and children is more valuable. But it is to create this lovable, sweet relation independently as a group of independent and able men and not to let people depend on one another. The economic dependence cannot create such hearty, friendly relation as economic independence, which is nothing more

than a habit! And if parents, brothers or sisters need mutual help, let that be taken as a loan.

I am grateful to my parents for my life because they taught me to love my craft. But to my father I am grateful that he taught me to think economically. When I was five years old, I started making shoes, which I sold from 5 to 20 "krejcar" each. Of course, they were small shoes for dolls, and for those shoes I had to make lasts myself.

But the money which I earned from them my father left to me and this was my first property from which I learned economy. And the memory of my father and his wise words prompted me to give you the opportunity to gain similar lessons in this institution.

## THE WAY TO HONOUR, POWER AND WELFARE

*This speech, delivered in the Masaryk Academy of Work in the year 1927 to the students of technical college, contains the views of Thomas Bata on the education and sense of work and undertaking.*

I wish by my to-day's speech to create in you the enthusiasm for enterprising spirit. But this enthusiasm I want to create firstly in you, students of the technical college, because you can learn first and best how to promote welfare for yourselves and for others. Production and enterprise create the spirit of service to the public and are the sources of honour and power for everyone and the only source of welfare for every single individual and the whole community.

The man in good shoes faces better injuries and bad weather and is more able to earn than one who is bare-footed. The cyclist is moving four times faster than the man walking and both spend the same amount of energy. The man in the automobile moves fifteen times faster than the walker, without his own fatigue. He feels the bliss of power, as by moving a pedal he creates a greater power to serve himself. And how feels the air pilot, when he sees in front of him the frightened birds fleeing before the new bird—man! Those birds whom man envied for their wings!

In our factory now a skilled man earns wages during 8 hours of work for one pair of shoes, while before the great war he had to work for the same pair 30 hours. We are proud that by our common effort we succeeded in reaching a standard equal to even the best American shoe factories in the service to the public and according to our estimate we will even be much ahead of them by the year 1928. The man employed in the American car factory earns for the car during 50—60 days an amount equal to our earning of 600 days of work due to the un-enterprising habit of all of us. I hope that you all agree that it is the duty of everyone of us to be strong, rich and that you all agree with the slogan:

Poverty—excuses.

Opulence—obligation.

Now, be enterprisers immediately, do not wait till your studies will be finished. The student-undertaker will create firstly strong economic foundation for himself, without which no prosperous undertaker can exist. He will make a budget for the rest of the year and for the following year with the aim : Earn much, spend reasonably, and save. Let young age invest, and old age save. Let not our pockets—full or empty—decide whether we should spend something or not.

None of us who did not take even so much pain to fully consider our economical task, estimate our programme and act according to that programme, has the right to lament failure.

If on the side of income is income from parents, let us make a strong agreement with them about it. Dress, shoes and other such properties let in our account be credited for money, because it is unbecoming of the undertaker if mother buys him clothes. I meet with people who have academic degrees in their pockets, but do not know about their own lives even as much as a nine year old boy knows. They do not know their expenditure on clothes, or how much they spent last year. Even a child of six should be taught to be independent. The income from parents let us put in the column of presents. Let us only point out those figures which come from our work, from our service to the public.

Every technician should work during his period of apprenticeship in some undertaking, even in small handicraft, where he can put theoretical knowledge into practice. The work in this undertaking should be the main figure on the side of income in his budget. The work in that craft should be the teacher of our investment. The undertaker needs firstly the inventions. I mean those small inventions which are inevitable in every work. The literature of all the world cannot help the mechanic to raise into the screw-vice the part which is more heavy than he is able to raise if in the workshop there is no crane or some arrangement for raising it. This is the problem of his work and he must know how to solve it.

The power of invention is a quality which we can gain only by practice in young age, in practical work, but never in the school. School is the tree of knowledge. Science is a great power, but it cannot be used without inventivity. In every case things must be invented and the best use made of scientific exploits. The income gained by work will measure our utility and enterprising capacity in the present and opulence or richness in future. The man who grows only on the expenses of his ancestors and the state will be with difficulty taught to serve himself and others without consideration of the measure of knowledge which he gained. Technical learning is directed only towards increasing of values and I think that the mechanic, who one year after his joining the technical college did not invent any tool or at least find out something which serves the people and brings money, proves beyond doubt that for this branch of work he has no ability whatsoever.

## **CHANGE FIRSTLY YOURSELVES!**

You want to be leaders of works of many fellow-workers. If you want to build an undertaking with them, prepare firstly yourselves. The leader of work, creator of undertaking should prepare firstly himself. Let us arrange our modes of living in such a way that will enable us to perform great deeds, spiritual and physical.

Firstly let's put in order our digestive organs. To fill up the stomach in the morning, empty it first. Thus during the first half of the day we do not have to go to the restaurant or to the bathroom. Our usual Czech breakfast—coffee and bread—provides the reason why in the morning the work is not as successful as it should be. It is due to the empty stomach. And in the afternoon the progress is not good due to the overloading of the stomach by a heavy lunch. For brain work let us take fruit, milk, vegetables, light puddings and not much meat. If we are working hard, i.e., for manual labour, let us eat more meat.

Let us be disciplined in doing even those works which appear repulsive to us. Let's concentrate on that work which we are doing at a particular time. Let's be disciplined in the finishing of that work. Only in such a way we may be able to solve the problems which need a few hours' continuous spiritual tension.

Let us be best and most suitably armed for our work. Look at this pencil, fastened to the chain. It can be much more easily caught hold of than a free one. By this mechanical pocket-book with loose papers you can also increase your output. Due to these two helpers not a single idea will escape you, not even those which come to your mind when you are somewhere on the top of a chimney or down in a tunnel. Those my two chief helpers helped me attain the third one—my first car—a few years earlier than I would have got it without their help. I noticed in my friends how dangerous it is for enjoyment instead of for work. Therefore, I kept my first car 14 days unused in the garage only to test my ability to dominate myself. Thus I formed the habit of seeing the most beautiful countries just where my duty leads me.

## HOW TO BE A WORLD ENTERPRISER

Be a world enterpriser, whether you produce machines or grow potatoes. Start from the viewpoint that the world was created only to serve you and you were born to serve all the world. Let us make even those smallest of things, but



let's make them the best in the world. "Make the most perfect rat-trap and the world will find the way to your door," says Emerson, and my experiences confirm his words.

To those of you who think that your desire for world's business may not be satisfied, allow me to tell you something about my friend Young from Lynn, Mass. Twenty-five years ago I received from him a price list for heel forming machines. At that time I was quite a small cobbler, but still I ordered that machine. On my travels here and there I heard his name very often, he used to supply his machines to all parts of the world, and, therefore, I was confirmed that his must be a world-renowned firm. On my visit I found Mr. Young with his son in a small workshop in an ordinary city-house. Both of them had their sleeves rolled up and hands full of work. I was surprised when I found that they were the only employees of the world-famous firm and that the room where they were working was the sole workshop of the firm. Their world's business connection and reputation was built up by the press.

Few people realize that for the production of potatoes the press is more useful than a pickaxe (or plough). Newspapers will tell us who produced the year's best and most tasteful potatoes in the world, and newspapers should tell all the world if we succeeded in producing the best potatoes in the world.

The Dutch farmer gains from one bushel of land over 20,000 crowns worth of yield. Of course, he pays voluntarily thousands to the newspapers for news and announcements. The farmer of the old days spent nothing on the newspapers and gained from one bushel hardly anything.

## **LET US LEARN FROM THOSE WHO WORK BEST**

Only those best workers have the right to join our order, no matter if they live at the other end of the world.

It is more respectable and more productive to learn from the best labourer than to put obstacles in his way by high tariffs. The demand of high tariffs for the protection of work is

the same as demanding from government the punishment of my customer if he does not want to buy from me.

I am for free import of shoes into our Republic. And I would be for free import of public cars, if I were producing them: The producer works for earning, for service to himself but mainly to serve the public. The producer, who demands permanent tariff shelters, demands his own low earning and is out for harming the public.

If I were a producer of cars, I would produce only motor cars for the general public and would produce only one type. We have not many rich people in our Republic. And if my car would not be able to successfully stand the world's competition, then I would limit my production to only one part of the car. But that part I would produce perfectly and the world would find the way to my door. Everybody working in our Republic has the right to be the owner of a car—not only Bata and the chief director of the Skoda works. The wrong idea that trade and industry cannot thrive without the protective tariff is widespread amongst industrialists and statesmen of many countries. It is not only a special Czech malady.

Only one thing that was common to old generations cannot be attained by enterprise—satisfaction. The betterment of human life depends on a continuous struggle and contest among the people. The main issue is—who earlier and who better. The prizes which God's hands give to the fighters in the form of economic success, are never equal. There are many combatants, but, alas, only one can be the winner. This is the source of human dissatisfaction and jealousy. But even jealousy must be diverted to the profit of human beings. Man would never invent an aeroplane if he were not jealous of the wings of the birds.

## THE SENSE OF UNDERTAKING AND WORK

When you, young men, in your enterprising will attain wealth and power, remember the words of Christ: "He who most powerful wants to be, should be the servant of yours."

Remember that your strength, your abilities belong to the public. Remember that the property, the circulating money in your undertaking, has for your fellow-workers the same importance as blood in your body for yourself.

The law gives to the undertaker the right to deal with his property which is marked in public books in his name, according to his wish.

Never will this right permanently be taken from the undertaker, just as the right of the general over the lives of his soldiers cannot be taken away. But deal with your property, which is a life-giver for thousands, like a conscientious military leader does with the lives of his soldiers. Still you have not the right to think of yourself more than the administrator of commonly earned money.

Be its good administrator. Every uselessly spent coin reflects defraud of the common deal. Help to increase the income of your fellow-workers. Remove the toiling from their work. Let machines do the toiling in the workshops and in the farm. Let the man reserve all his power for spiritual struggles—in the contest of ideas and things.

Nobody can shake the throne of your work, be it great or small, so long as you do your work in the spirit of service to the public, service to mankind.

## **BY SELF-DISCIPLINE TO HEALTH AND PEACE**

**The only broadcast speech of Thomas Bata in the year 1930.**

I believe in mankind and his continuous progress. I believe that his betterment immensely helps the technical inventions which are but the children of human spirit. The spirit of men, which by work grows bigger, disciplines his brain and courage so that he can distribute his store of knowledge to others, in which action he finds the biggest happiness and the fulfilment of his life.

Hundreds of thousands of you are sitting in your homes and hearing my words over the radio—the youngest and best child of modern invention. How deeply penetrates this machine

into the privacy of man, into the arrangements of his family life! Man is a social creature and demands contact with other people. The past gave him this contact and enjoyment mainly in the taverns. From the tavern's society only a man gains but from the broadcast the whole family is gaining.

But the technique changes much more his character and thoughts.

The technique is the fruit of self-discipline and creates also self-discipline. It is not a chance that nations, which are prominent in the field of technical inventions, are living in the most ordered way and are progressing through their noble self-discipline. And on the contrary, those nations living in a disorganized way and whose people are labouring under discontent, are incapable of doing any great work or making any invention and are, therefore, living in want. Invention, either technical or otherwise, is not a simple thing. It is the outcome of order and self-discipline.

There are people who are afraid of the coming days of mechanical progress and say that these are leading man to slavery. They are people who still do not find a way to make machinery and improve our servants. There cannot be any doubt that when in our Republic every working man will have for his service ten horses and his car, our Republic will be much richer and more powerful.

In my daily life I meet thousands of people of all nationalities. I find that life is ruled by one law—that the world belongs to the self-disciplined, to those who can rule over themselves. I find that when a little or big power comes into the hands of an undisciplined man, sooner or later this power jumps out of his hands, gains supremacy over him and makes him more unhappy than he was before.

His incapability again puts him under the rule and protection of a self-disciplined man for the benefit of all and also his own. The same is in business firms, banking houses, states and nations. Discipline is life, absence of it is death.

The art of self-discipline cannot be learnt from books. It is learnt from life, and everyone can learn it. Each day is a school and every opportunity the lesson. Self-discipline teaches us to make a normal arrangement of everyday life, to control our stomach and makes us temperate in our habits and enjoyment. Self-discipline increases the output of work. Let us discipline our mind and concentrate upon the work. Let us be disciplined in the finishing of that work. Only in that way can we solve the problems which need a few days' mental tension. Only in such a way we gain control over chaos, misery and deficiencies for which we can never be reconciled.

Let us control our enjoyment and education so as to strengthen our will, put an armour of steel to protect our mind. Let us read only books which encourage us to work. A story, even most exquisitely told about an unsuccessful life, cannot lead us to victory. On the contrary, such a story takes from us the joy of life and courage for actions.

Be kings in your thoughts and plans and businessmen in their realization. Only such men can lord it over technique and machines and not allow them to fall on our heads. Only through such work can we gain courage which increases the vitality and morality of a nation and makes men more generous.

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VI

CITIZEN



*"My valuable—the public's sacred."*

*"The duty of a citizen is to rule, not to scold."*

*"Just as I want, that every man in my factory should be his own director, in the same way I want that every one of our citizens should be his own mayor"— Bata's political ideas.*

*There was something of the old Roman in Bata's relation towards town, province, state and towards his fellow-citizens....In the town with straight and good roads, irrigated rivers, perfect schools, aqueducts, hospital and public administration swiftly working in a planned way for one certain, great and commonly beneficial end. Probably Bata would never have any idea to engage himself in making political expressions and to insist for influence on the management of public affairs. He was a man absolutely "unpolitical" so far as is understood by the word "politics" all the world over.*

*"Let everyone be happy in his own way," he wrote once unconscious of the fact that thus he repeated the words of a statesman who died 15 years ago. The political speakers did not interest him and the better they knew to speak, the bigger distrust he had towards them. He thought that the charm of speech and its delivery captivate men such that one stops to think and begins to applaud. And that in such an important thing as dealing with the system of life he thought there should not be allowed demonstrations of oratory. In that case one man should not speak for hours and others only listen to him. There should be discussions and exchange of views, with paper and pencil in hands and with calculations. For Bata surely was not drawing an example of the French but of the Anglo-Saxon democracy, and even in that he thought there was the fault of many speeches and lack of proper calculations.*

*He looked upon politics as a mediator for the sake of strength and abilities of every citizen, and as a mediator to organise that strength into a single, higher and common task. For what task? Absolutely clear and concrete: For the betterment of life's situation of all people on that piece of earth on which they just live. Those political realists have Faust's feeling :*



*"Here, from this earth, gush my blisses, here, this sun shone on my affections." And accordingly he arranged his plans and tasks. With all this he believed sincerely in the omnipotence of human powers if all people are convinced by the politicians that their first duty as citizens is to help oneself by one's own power, to live on one's own means and help to create great public deals which a single individual cannot achieve alone. As the greatest sin committed on the people he described the attitude which leads to find the source of existence through prayers, in rushing for support for presents, etc. The political party which gains, educates, and preserves its members in this manner has in itself the germ of death, because how can live and grow that organism which millions of people want to exploit and not give it more than a simple vote at the time of election?*

*He was an admirer of self-management and held that the village, town, district, province and state have the right and obligation to live upon their own sources, to economise without debts and make such expenses that should be the seed for new incomes, either from public or private enterprise. He hated the economy which leads to dependence on the help of the province or state and attacked it by most violent criticism. He had seen in it the humiliation of citizens from whom the state takes away even those sources of public income which they need for the administration of their village and thus make them run with their caps in hand from one state office to another crying for help in the solution of their financial problem. This method leads only to covering swindles in towns and village budgets, which artificially were increased for getting bigger help from the province or state. This system, according to him, was spoiling the character of citizens, because in such a system the best mayor is he who most successfully knows how to bend the back-bone. By this system, Bata opined, it is impossible to get to the group of powerful states because there is dearth of that strongest basis: strong citizens.*

*Ardent for the competition in the different states or provincial groups and for local patriotism, Bata wanted that every village, district and province should mutually compete. He had felt the presence of a power which automatically must make a better position of all the state. Therefore, he exerted all his means for the transfer of Zlin*

*into a model town and he pressed that his poor district should have its own administration so that by its own power could be built here a district which should serve as an example.*

*"Let us be kings in our dreams—and businessmen in our realisation," was the slogan of Thomas Bata when he entered the political arena in the year 1923, solicited for the administration of the town of Zlin. The plans which he presented before his citizens and the speed with which he realised them, showed that he kept his creed.*

*The most energetic Prime Minister of Czechoslovakia said that the way Thomas Bata—political laic—gained the confidence of citizens, is a masterly school of politics.*

*Therefore it is worthwhile publishing his political speeches and manifestoes.*

#### TOWN ELECTION IN ZLIN 1923

*In 1923 Thomas Bata finds that he can perform great economical tasks only if he could succeed in assuring the minority of his fellow citizens about the correctness of his views and to gain their confidence. Many small conflicts with the former town administrator led him to introduce his own list of candidates into the town-board. The growing Zlin had muddy, terrible roads, but the town representatives had built the town-house for 6 millions which was too much. The town had too expensive electricity, but its mayor refused Bata's offer to make all the wirings free and charge for current much less per unit. The town-board wanted to have in the town-house a tavern. Bata wanted to have there a library. The personal competition and political fights were such that Bata wanted to leave the decision to the inhabitants, who should lead the town in future. At a number of public meetings he explained to his friends and enemies his views and plans for the administration of the town and won the elections. His group, which entirely changed the management of Zlin, gained firstly 17 out of 30 places in the town's administration (counsels). The following are Thomas Bata's speeches before the election.*

#### OUR UNDERTAKING AND TOWN OF ZLIN

*The results of our work in the last time are good.*

*It proves the correctness of the figures of our statistical department.*

We increased the measure of well-being of our employees from 100 to 158 points during the last year.

We reduced the prices of our products from 200 to 100 points, while the index of all other goods in our Republic shows the reduction from 200 to 130 points only.

The difference in the reduction of prices of our goods by 50 per cent and reduction of prices of all other goods by 35 per cent shows the measure in which we contribute towards the increase of prosperity all over the country. And moreover, our undertaking began this year to work with some profit.

It is the triumph of our energetic work which to a great extent tends to lower the cost of production. The credit of this victory goes to all our employees as well as to the generous men leading our state, and also to our Workers' Committee which has not been putting any impediments before us since December when I spoke to the workers about its (*i.e.* the Committee's) work.

We still have a long way before us. I have the feeling of not being a capable undertaker when I compare how much our undertaking gives to its employees and the customers and how much the great American undertakings give them. Although on the last time we surpassed many of the European undertakings, still we are only dwarfs in comparison with the great American companies, so far as service is concerned.

Thus it is not surprising that from our country always more and more young, capable and the best type of people try to find their career in America with the idea of sharing the great prosperity which great American concerns bring to their employees and to all the country.

Many people affirm that in our country it is not possible to create great undertaking, because we have no sea, neither so much of coal and petrol as in America. I affirm that the great prosperity of America is created firstly by the wisdom and diligence of her people. There are larger countries

with larger and richer natural resources than America, but because their inhabitants lack the rightful comprehension of things, there is starvation and misery.

I want to prove that even in our small country it is possible to create such great undertakings. For that I need firstly the right view and right understanding from my employees. And I will tell you why.

Our undertaking is not situated in the right place. The vote happened to come on Zlin when I even did not know what I wanted to do. Zlin lacks all the conditions which a great factory, as I have in my mind, needs for its growth and existence.

In Zlin there is scarcity of water. It is far from the main railways, big cities, banks and almost isolated from the main road. It has no direct telephone and road communications with its neighbouring towns and there are no schools, hospitals, gas-factory and the like.

For the removal of all these difficulties it is necessary to work in conformity with the town-council. But here in Zlin there are no political parties having their representatives at the town-board, and an understanding with them is almost impossible, specially if they think, as they do now, that our employees do not want such mutual understanding.

This conviction the political parties got in the last election during which our employees enlisted themselves into the service of different political parties.

You all remember the last election. It was the first election in the towns in our Republic (year 1919). The political party No. 12 had been thinking that the party No. 11 was successful in gaining more members and patrons amongst our workers. And it was true. At that time the manager of our warehouse was engaged more in politics than supplying goods to the workers.

I was powerless, because according to the then existing law flour, sugar and other foodstuffs were distributed by the

Grain Institution only to those warehouses which were controlled by some political party or other' and I had to allow those political romps, otherwise our workers would not get their bread.

The party No. 12 warned me before it launched a fight against our undertaking. They demanded the dismissal of our warehouse manager. I refused, because otherwise I would be pressed to leave the warehouse to the other political party and the struggle again would be started by the party No. 11.

Thus the fight between the parties began. The party No. 12 contrived just on the last day before the election course rested on our warehouse. They said that we were exporting extra food stuff to foreign countries and immediately calculated that only of flour we had exported 30 vans.

People believed those and many other lies, and the party No. 12 thus won the election.

In the court the party No. 12 ran away from lies, and were sentenced, but this did not bring about any change on the fact that this party won the election due to their slogan "against Bata".

The more regrettable thing was that the party won the election with the help of our employees.

Due to this, during all the four following years all political parties representing the town board were convinced that it was convenient to go forward against Bata and that the best way to gain the confidence of our employees was to abuse our undertaking.

During all that time the political parties dealt with us in the most dishonourable way.

What do I need from you? Only to help me in putting away from our town those political trips and tricks in the same way as you helped me to do so in our warehouse and the workers' committee. For this you should prepare your own list of candidates for the town board.

In the management of our small town politics and diplomacy are as harmful as they were in our warehouse and in your Workers' Committee.

The town is not making any laws, they are only receiving and spending money, either reasonably or unreasonably.

In our town during the last four years money was spent under the slogan: "Anyway, Bata will pay it."

And does Bata really pay it ? Do not our employees pay it indirectly ?

I do not want property for myself. I like to be only the administrator of my property. For my personal matters I spend less than many of my employees. Every newly gained property only increases my responsibility as administrator which require me to employ it for the benefit of others. By the newly gained money I can increase only the life's measure of my employees but not that of mine. To meet the necessities of my family would be less enough work than I do now.

Even the exile of politics from our town I don't need for myself, but for you and for the benefit of all our citizens.

Unreasonable spending of money, though it be named "Bata's money" should be a matter of great concern for you.

Who among you needs the town hall for six million crowns ? For all of you a town hall for six hundred thousand would be sufficient. The rest you could surely spend on more reasonable and beneficial things. A thorough repair of the damaged road to the railway station would serve you full four years and would cost a few thousands only. The hospital and many other things which are needful to you, could be established for that money.

Put on the list of your candidates only names of the right men !

Don't be afraid of defeat !

You will find friends even where you least expect them.

Every human being in Zlin knows what our undertaking means for him and what the reasonable spending of the town's money means.

If the fight of political parties and the confusion which is created by it is removed, we will be able even with small taxes to get all that we need here. Even out of our small brook we can make a big river by constructing dams in the upper flow of it.

We will build a great undertaking for the benefit of our employees and consumers in our Republic and all over the world. We will succeed in creating a town which by its growth, order and its economic administration will serve as an example for all other towns in our state.

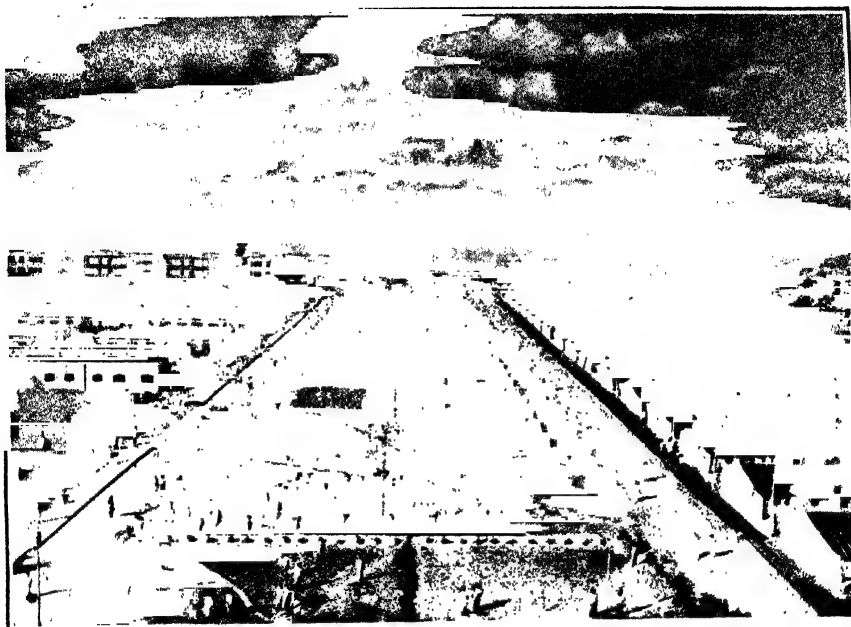
## FRIENDS !

*Thomas Bata found his economical deal threatened in the same way as he found his honour threatened. On the walls of the newly constructed townhall, which was mostly built by the money gained by his life's work, should be put a paper which consisted of insults to his factory! In that paper was the aspersion that during the war when the factory was under military control, he made in it a prison for the workers. When this paper, in which he had read the height of attacks on his work and his person, was put before him his blood revolted and by a wide swing he wrote by his handle instead of by the nib round it: "SHAME, LIE!" and immediately called a public meeting in the main Zlin square where he delivered the following speech :*

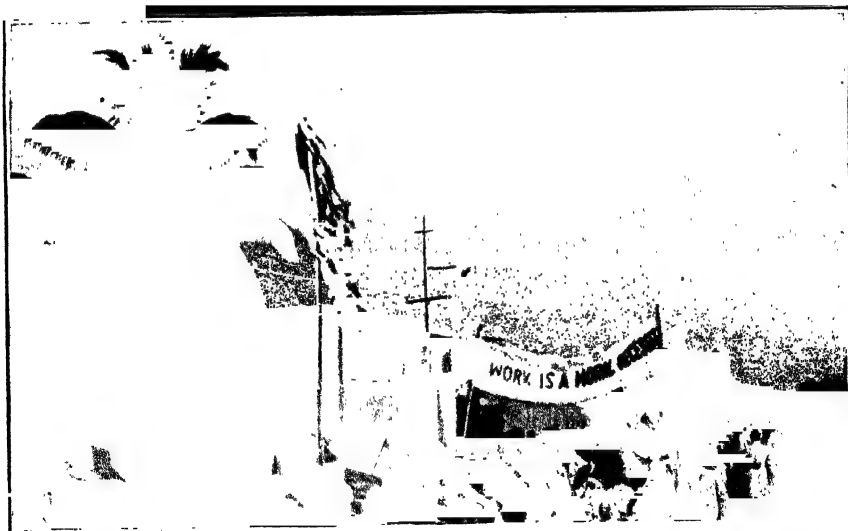
The majority of you here are our employees, who come here on my invitation to defend the truth.

In the last meeting I heard from the workers who are grateful for the benefits which their families during the great war received from me, the words :

"We bow our heads before you." On the public soil you are the public, and it is for me to bow my head before the public.

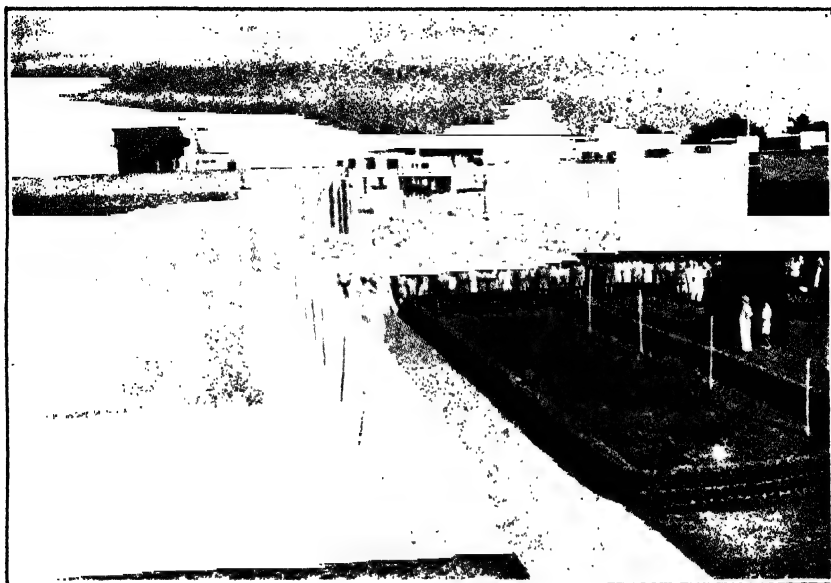


Batanagar—the central part.

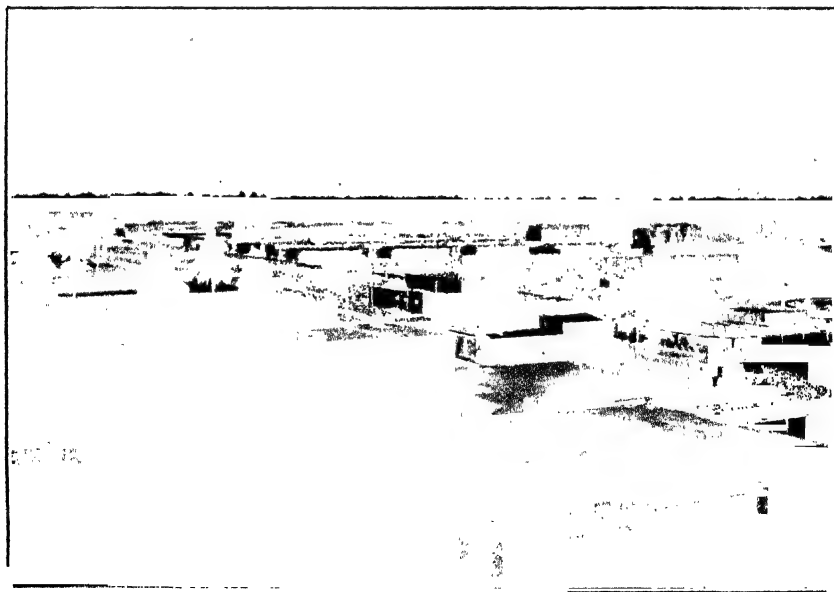


"Work is a moral necessity" is the main slogan ; banner carried by the Batanagar workers in their Grand March Past on the Batanagar Annual Sports Day.





Every year on the 12th of July the employees of Batanagar remember the tragic death of their spiritual leader, the late Thomas Bata by a ceremony on the factory courtyard, as is seen in the above picture.



Another view of the Batanagar colonies and factories.

Standing on the public soil, I feel like being the servant of the public, i.e., the servant of you all !

I invited you here to explain to you why I signed the town-memory book by the holder instead of by the pen and why I wrote there the words : "SHAME, LIE." I decided that as a citizen of this town, I must prevent the spreading of lies to our descendants.

The memory book says that we had built a prison for the workers in our factory.

A prison they named a small room under the steps of our factory. Such a room is in every house and usually they store there potatoes. They did not say, however, that in the building near that room, every day 1,500 of you were walking daily to and from the factory for lunches, for which you paid 50 hallers ( $\frac{1}{2}$  anna). They kept silent that during the war, during the critical shortage of foodstuff, our undertaking supplied foodstuff to two thirds of the inhabitants of this town.

I invited you here to help me to defend my freedom, my honour. I thank you for your attendance in large numbers. I thank you for this expression of confidence and friendship. Your friendship and confidence in me make me offer my friendship and confidence to you. Your willingness to defend my honour and freedom oblige me to put even my life at stake for your freedom and honour.

I wish to make it clear that the honour of a man does not depend on his political achievements or on the nature of his occupation. I want to defend the principle that among the employers are good and bad men in the same way as amongst the employees. We register our protest against the violence of truth in the town-memory book which reads as follows :—

"The town representatives decided on 7th Sept. this year at the end of their term of office by a majority of only one vote to put on the wall the memory book of the town of Zlin."

The majority of the citizens do not agree with the writings in the memory book. The views of war-time and the present day are too one-sided ; only the views of one political party are voiced and overlook, even insult, other parties and citizens.

We, the citizens, who assemble here on this occasion, are protesting against the putting on the wall of those mischievous lies and libels.

We demand the town-memory book to be written truthfully and without insulting anybody.

After writing, the memory book should be given to all inhabitants for inspection before it is put on the wall.

Do you agree with this protest? (Loud "YES") Thank you for your expression once more and I request you to peacefully disperse.

The election-speeches are already delivered and we do not want that this honourable protest meeting should suffer by them.

## OUR WORKING PROGRAMME

*This manifesto was for Thomas Bata as a signed draft, which he promise to fulfil. As is seen, he fulfilled more than he promised.*

Why do I solicit the confidence of our inhabitants? Because I, born here and being a citizen of this town, know no one else who can help this my town better from to-day's difficulties.

According to the election order the mayor is elected indirectly. Only the representatives elected into the town-board elect from themselves the mayor.

I want to become either the mayor, or do not want to be elected into the town-board at all. For that reason I put myself on the 15th place in the list of candidates against the wish of many of our employees who wanted me to be on the first place. If I would be on the first place and my followers behind me, it would be helpless even if the other parties would elect me as mayor.

If our citizens have confidence in me, then I will think of other members of district boards whose duty will be to control my work and to give me advice. The responsibility towards the citizens for all that will happen during my tenure of office I want to take upon myself.

If the citizens think that there is not sufficient ability or honesty in me then I will not be elected and I will continue in the fruitbearing work for the elevation of undertaking and prosperity of my employees.

For quarrels of infinite bargaining with a number of political parties, would be useless loss of my time and also my power.

To the distrustful citizens, who are afraid that power thus gained I might abuse for my own benefit, for my own selfish ends I make this proclamation, which I sign in my full name and which I reflect as an obligation on me.

We will be saving firstly on the interest. The debt of our town after the payment of all present obligations and open accounts will be about 6 million crowns, which are loaned on 5—6 per cent. The interest, which the town annually must pay is about 350½ thousand crowns. Thus the situation is that the whole revenue from taxes is hardly sufficient for the payment of this interest alone.

With the help of my knowledge and my popularity in the financial circles I want to get credit for the town, even short period loans, for four per cent only.

Thus a saving of 1 per cent in interest will mean about 70,000 crowns annually which will be one-fifth of the total tax collections.

The town's immovable property has an annual revenue—according to the estimate for the year 1922—of 12,732 crowns, which equals 4 per cent interest of the town's properties, estimated totally on 320,000 crowns. The town cannot take loans against this property for more than 240,000 crowns. Of course, besides this immovable property there is another guarantee,

the paying abilities of the citizens. The credit ability of the town which is 80 per cent depends on one tax-payer, as it is in our town, which is very small. The creditors cannot know if this tax-payer will be able to pay the interest and amortization of the debt, or if he will transfer his undertaking to another place, and thus the estimated income of the town comes down (in Zlin this case already happened).

Credit can be gained only by personal guarantee, and everyone can stand guarantee only for that on which he has influence and responsibility.

Those are the reasons why I could not get cheap credit for the town earlier and why I will not be able to get it even now if the responsibility for the administration of the town's matters is not put into my hands.

We will construct in the whole town and the neighbouring villages a network of electricity at our own expenses, as already we offered you. In other words, we will make for the town free of all charges such arrangements which any other electric company will not do for less than 2,700,000 crowns. The electricity we will supply continuously without any stoppage. We are ready to make an agreement with the town for ten years, if a single member of the municipality will demand it. The price for electric current we will make for general lighting 30 per cent and for industrial purposes 20 per cent cheaper than the inhabitants of other towns purchase from other electric concerns.

We will take care that the office of the district board in Zlin should be erected as quickly as possible and better arrangements of roads and communications in our town and the neighbouring villages taken up.

We will not demand during my tenure of office from the town even the slightest charges for erecting new quarters and parts which are built by our factory, although we feel it right that for other new quarters, not ours, the expenses must be paid by the town.

We will take care of cleaning the roads on the entire expenses of our firm. .

Every agreement, which the town will make with our firm, we will publish at our expense and present to the citizens for consideration.

Every bill which our firm will present for the supplies to the town we will also publish at our own expense, so that everyone of the citizens can be satisfied of its authenticity.

The results of the election of the ZLIN town municipality board in the year 1923.

	<b>Votes</b>	<b>Seats</b>
Batamen	1322	17
Socialists	216	3
Catholic Party	188	3
Communists	454	6
Trader's Party	157	1

### **FRIENDS !**

*Thomas Bata's manifesto after the election :*

I thank you for your confidence and for your friendship. You persuade me to work for you.

You said by your to-day's voting :

"DO WORK"

I will do that work.

There should not be another town where honest work is more respected and better paid.

There should not be another town where the loafer is more hated. To the honest workers we offer everything, to the loafers nothing.

### **THE GREATER ZLIN**

*Speech to the fellow-workers in the factory after the election in 1923.*

We, in the factory, have won twice. We firstly showed ourselves united before the public. Many people came to me before the election and said that they knew you better than I

did and assured me that I would be disappointed by you. Those who think that you do not understand me were all mistaken.

Your understanding for our common work gives me strength and confidence for the next work—the work for you.

Now end the speeches and work begins. Our working programme for the elections was very poor. But still our main antagonist (rival) said that he would even vote for us, if he had the guarantee that we would fulfil our promises. Our promises were to be modest, not to create doubt amongst our very modest citizens.

The greater Zlin can be built only by great men. How are we to distinguish great men from the small ones? The small man thinks during his work only of himself. He works only so much as to provide foodstuff for filling his stomach.

The man who thinks of his family is a mediocre man. A great man is he who works so much that his work brings benefit also to others, his neighbouring states and even to all the world. The aim of Great Zlin is in the prosperity of its inhabitants. The sufficient employment guarantees in the town sufficient foodstuffs, but wretchedness is not always in hunger. The insufficiency of good dress and living quarters, insufficiency of educational facilities also fall in the category of wretchedness. Particularly, our quarters are very poor. The ill-planned houses bring pressure upon our wives and make them work hard all day. Such an over-worked woman is not a kind teacher to the children and is a bad companion to her husband when he comes home from work. We must arrange our quarters in such a way as will relieve the women of too much physical labour. This can be done by co-operation and understanding with the town. A single person cannot build the powerhouse, gas-factory, water pipe connection, steam laundry, etc., which are all so much needful and beneficial.

Our representatives whom we send out into the world searching for new ideas must bring us also the latest inventions even from this part of life. All technical productional inventions must serve to increase the amenities of life and improve the standard of living of the people, particularly of the women and children.

This is our biggest working programme of which we did not speak during the elections. And this programme is much harder to carry on. It consists of new thinking on the part of men and better arrangements of our houses. Only then our town can stand as the pride of our Republic when our visitors will admire the life of our employees and all the citizens of our town.

## **THE ELECTIONS IN 1927 (second)**

*Thomas Bata's manifesto entitled :*

### **THE FULFILLED PROGRAMME.**

In our programme for the year 1923 we made the following promises :

1. To secure loans on easy interest of 4 per cent for the town.....:....DONE.
2. Erect in our town and the neighbouring villages at our own expense a network of electricity.....DONE.
3. To endeavour to establish the District Board for roads and communications.....DONE.
4. The construction of roads and drains and canals in the newly created parts of Zlin at our own expense ..... DONE.
5. To take care of cleaning the town's roads at our own expense.....DONE.
6. To publish every agreement between ourselves and the town.....DONE.
7. All elected Batamen will work during their term of office without any remuneration.....THEY DID.



8. Every bill, which we present to the town for supplies, publish at our expense. ....Was not done because we supplied the town everything free of all charges.

## **MORE CONFIDENCE**

*When the first four years of office ended the group of Batamen led by Thomas Bata presented the accounts to the citizens of Zlin at a meeting called on the 9th October, 1927. Before presenting the figures and statistics to the public Thomas Bata presented to the citizens the following manifesto:*

Dear friends, again I appeal for your confidence. I must firstly explain to you why this time I put myself at the 20th place in the list of candidates.

I am on that place because I need more of your confidence than during the last elections. I need more confidence to do for you more useful work than I did during the last four years. Almost the half of my previous term of office was wasted in useless quarrels and unsuccessful meetings of the town's board.

The opposition parties joined hands only to foil our active work. They refused to join with us in any work for the benefit of this town. Their leader said in one meeting four years ago that he would even vote for us if he got the assurance that we would fulfil all the promises we made. But still he organised oppositions only to defer our work to make us unable to fulfil the promises we made to you. And in this opposition gained the deputy mayor, because you elected 11 members of the opposition group.

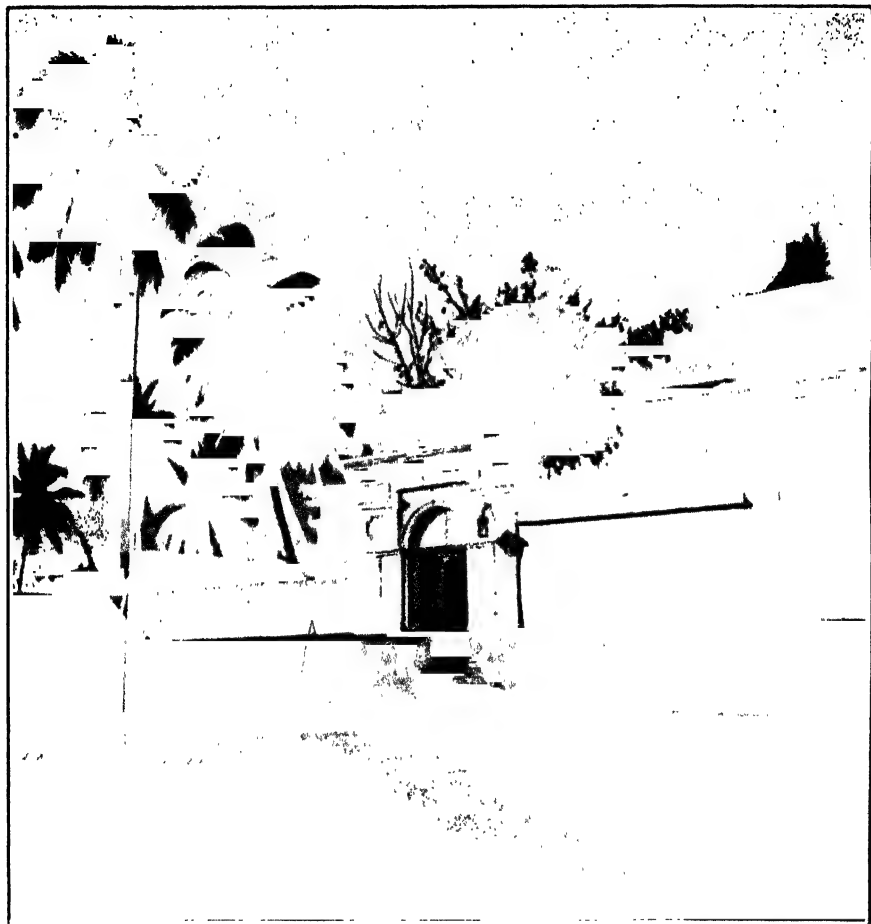
Voice from the public : "We did not elect them."

Bata : I believe you. But others elected them for lack of proper understanding and you should convince them that they mean no good for themselves or for you.

Our opposition had elected such a deputy mayor who was the biggest obstacle to our work. How great struggles we had to engage in even for small things the protocol from the town board's meeting will show, which is one of those many foiled by unreasonable opposition.







The entrance to the Bata Club at Batanagar. The social life of Batanagar is speedily developing together with the growth of the whole town. There are three Clubs, namely Bata Club, Batanagar Sports Club and the Club for the Graduates of Bata School. The Batanagar Sports Club particularly is very active, having one thousand members. The sports grounds for football, volleyball, tennis, cricket, skating rinks, wrestling, boxing, gymnasium, and athletic grounds are open not only to the privileged few, but to all the citizens of Batanagar. Besides these, there is a big library, reading room, music room, two cinemas, and a dramatic club with its own stage and other paraphernalia.



Another view of the Batanagar living colonies.

The meeting failed only for the determination of one section that the town should not give full powers to its advocate. It was the question of abolishing the lease agreement for the tavern in the town-hall, so that the mayor Bata could establish a library in place of the tavern. The mayor Bata said according to the protocol, the following at that time :

“The big majority of citizens during last elections expressed that they don't wish to increase the tavern life more on account of the clean family life in our town”.

Under this slogan was contested the last elections and we may thank the electors that they elected 17 of us and not only 14. Every second house, otherwise, would be a tavern and in every house misery make its appearance. Over the tough resistance of the opposition the town won with a vast majority in all the instances.

The sober clear heads in the town-hall showed in this action their anxiety for the welfare of the citizens.

It is not possible to perform any big work if half the time is wasted in defending it against those who try to spoil it.

Only if you elect my 20 candidates will you make it possible that even during my absence the work can be carried on by the deputy mayor who wants to help us in completing our working programme and not act like the last one who put only obstacles in our way.

All the work of the town board and mainly the members of our group during the last period was devoted to the betterment of the family life—life of women and children in this town.

*The number of electioneering meetings at the huge halls of the warehouse (each room for 4,000 persons) shows clearly how great is the desire for better life and co-operation among the people.*

*All the meetings were interesting. There were no speeches about the possibilities of political changes in some states or victory or failure of some doctrines, but they brought to light the*

ideas and proposals of how to organise the powers of Zlin and the district for betterment of all the inhabitants and how to produce better articles more easily.

*In those meetings there were surprisingly big attendances of women and village peasants and farmers from all around Zlin. Maybe, this was why so many simple but important questions which highly educated political speakers usually overlook, were discussed in those meetings.*

*In one of those meetings when the problem of "How to administer the town to get for our earnings more values" was being discussed it was found that women have entirely different views from men in this respect. For instance, a simple woman complained that sometimes bad eggs, stale or too expensive butter are placed for sale in the market.*

*How to check it? Proposals come for stricter control, more punishments and police vigilance. But there are also proposals for great reduction of taxes so that more peasants from distant places might come to the market to sell their products which would mean more goods in the market and greater competition. And greater competition and more goods in the market always mean best goods for just prices.*

*The debate is rising. Women, men, peasants, workers, Bata, business men, craftsmen—all speak. Result: The town of Zlin decided in favour of entirely free business without town-tax or market fees. The economical problem which in a large measure moves the world was solved here for the benefit of all.*

*All the Bata's meetings were marked by the absence of useless speeches. "The electioneering meeting is a good opportunity for the citizens to meet together, hear proposals for the betterment of the common life, see and meet the men and women who promised to fulfil those proposals and to judge if those persons were sufficient guarantee that the promised work would be done."*

## OUR NEEDS AND AGRICULTURE

Farmers ! Try to gain more money on lesser toil !

Man is not, of course, born to live without work.

But mankind can live without toiling. It can be more easily achieved in industry than in farming. But even in farming the development of the people will prove that work can and will be done without toiling.

.What does an industrious man, as in Zlin, like to eat ?

1. Meat.
2. Products of milk.
3. Fruit.
4. Vegetables.

Puddings only if not much flour in them.

This food he needs, because it develops the brain better, which an industrial man needs more than muscles. It is luck that production of meat and milk products does not demand much toil from the farmer, if he manages his farm in such a way that the cattle attend themselves and special care is not needed. During the greater part of the year the cattle can feed themselves. The farmer in modern well arranged farms comes only for the ready products—for milk. And even the milking he does by machine.

Fruit is gained also nearly without toil. For this not much of brain and knowledge are necessary. Of course, the fruit trees must be of better species than they are at present.

Divide your production. Produce only those goods which people like and for which they are ready to pay.

Don't be afraid of lack of markets. Our consumption, and the consumption of industrious people, are and will be increasing. It is our wish to build our milk house in such a way that everyone of our employees and every Zlin citizen could get in the right time not only good milk but within a short time we all could drink our coffee not with milk but with milk-cream. And for this plenty of milk is necessary.

We wish that everyone of our workers should have for his breakfast fruits and eggs and that every slice of bread our children should have, thickly besmeared with butter or jam.



Thirty years ago in our district there was no market for agricultural products, because every citizen, either farmer or craftsman, produced his agricultural products for his own home consumption.

Great changes were made by the industrialisation of crafts.

The industry exports its products to all parts of the world, which brings money to the district and increases the population of the town. And those people cannot produce themselves the agricultural goods they need, but must purchase them.

Those people consume more agricultural products than our district is able to produce.

Therefore, it is reasonable that this district should select such agricultural products only which will be most profitable and easily saleable and which cannot easily be imported to us because of deterioration of quality by long transport, such as milk, meat, vegetables, fruit, etc.

Some of the farmers may think : And what if the industry will slacken ? Of course, times might come when the industry may slacken. But all over the world the industrial production is centralising; towns are increasing and this change—which occurred in our district—is nothing else than the symptom of the approach of a new time and new elevation of life of all mankind.

The future will be much better than the present, of course, only for those who look with confidence towards the future.

So, arrange our agricultural production so as to satisfy the demands of the new time, demands of newly elevated people of our district.

## **THE WAY OF NEW THINKING**

This district was surprised by the creation of our shoe-industry. A large majority of the people cannot well adapt themselves to the new situation, because they have the conviction that only farming can provide a man with the safest source

of livelihood. .Therefore, they spend money for the purchase of land and for the betterment of their farms for providing themselves in old age.

And they do not understand that by this they are killing not only themselves but also their new work and that the industry which helped them out of their misery and which alone can guarantee them decent life for the future, will once elevate them all.

The fear that this industry can slacken is reasonable only so far and will hold good only so long as our people devote themselves to it only by half instead of devoting all their spirit to it.

Industry demands that people should revise their ideas and opinion. And if in our district industry should more deeply throw its roots, in the first place their thoughts and ideas should undergo a thorough change, and the money industry brings to them should not be spent on land and agriculture, but for gaining vast knowledge of their work. They must adjust their lives to their new employment to be able to perform that spiritual work which industry demands from them.

They must realise that what land means to the farmer special knowledge and technical skilfulness means to the man in industry.

But if our people want their savings to be used for the purchase of land in our district, this saving would not be good for anybody. The lands which even now are comparatively expensive, would be still more costly and thus its purchase would bring to the purchaser more loss than profit.

## **OUR NEW WORKING PROGRAMME**

At the previous election I solicited your confidence and the right to work for you, the right to save our town from financial ruin.

At this year's election I seek for your confidence to create together with you a town which will be the pride of our Republic.

Our production is increased, and our products, always better, victoriously marching all over the world will provide us with enough to create all that a powerful, joyful and a productive life needs.

We will construct all our main roads with asphalt in the same way as we built our factory roads to remove the last sign of mud and dust from them. The small roads and lanes we will make dust and mud-proof like those in our colonies.

We will build up our roads for pedestrians and for cars in such a way that life can be spread symmetrically all over the town, and in every part of the town trade may flourish.

We will erect the aqueduct for the whole town.

We will establish exemplary schools for all citizens, private and public, with exemplary management and well-paid teachers and educationists.

We will construct play grounds and children's homes in convenient places in Zlin.

We will build up a gas-factory for the comfort of our wives—for cooking and heating by gas.

Under the town we will construct concrete tunnels, as we have done in our factory, for the introduction of electricity, gas, water, steam, telephone and other modern facilities into every house in the town.

We will take care that all taxes, which make the necessities of daily life more expensive may be abolished, except taxes on alcohol.

## **CITIZENS !**

While preparing for the town's election, let us have in mind only the programme of work.

Even before the last election we drew up a programme showing what we wanted to do during our four years' tenure of office.

The programme is an obligation. The programme is a signed draft.

Let us also draw up this year a programme for the further betterment of our life.

Let all of us think it over.

Write on a piece of paper all that you would like to have and send it to us. It may be that all your wishes cannot be fulfilled immediately, but unknown wishes cannot be fulfilled at any time.

During the last four years our town board fulfilled those wishes of which it was asserted that it was not possible to realise.

In the same spirit we want to work and will work in the days to come.

## THE CRAFT'S QUESTION

I am a craftsman as were all my ancestors and as you all are.

Nobody can deny my right to participate in the solution of craft's problems, because I proved myself to be a capable craftsman and as I was able to build a big industry beginning as a small craftsman.

In my opinion the craft's question should be so solved as to turn small craftsmen into big ones. In the way of its realisation stand mostly the views widespread by the craft's political party. The activity of this party is mainly responsible for the weakness and smallness of their virtues and power and it is because of its influence that greatness has been reduced to the point of crime. Thus craft's education, led by this spirit, reduces strong individuals to weak ones and weak ones to almost wrecks.

In our town the craftsmen comprehended this fatal influence and were able to release themselves from its clutches. They understand that it is more beneficial for them to use the strong and great craftsmen, say undertakers, as a ladder for raising their own crafts instead of trying to bring about their ruin as is recommended by the leader of the craft's party, the minister N.

The consequences of this are already being felt. During the last four years the number of tradesmen in Zlin proportionately increased with the rise of our undertaking and in an equal measure the condition of our crafts improved.

At the meeting of mayors from the whole district of Uher'ske Hradiste did not come any single individual in his own car, or even by taxi and there were amongst them even the mayors from the craft's party. In Zlin after the last election, the majority of the craftsmen have their own cars and at least all are touring in hired cars.

Woe to the craftsman who conceals in himself the hate against those who outrun him, those who are better than he. This hate poisons even his children.

Before everything, I thank my father for my success in life. In his failures and others successes he doctored a tonic for our prosperity. I remember one story from his life. In Hradiste, in the company of other shoemakers my father looked prophetically at the May's factory chimneys, the only ones in that district, and said that such chimneys his sons would have one day. Very poor business was made that day and many of the shoemakers had not any pennies to go to taverns and warm up. These my father's words they took as blasphemy and did not speak to him for many days. But for us, sons, it was a great encouragement.

Enlighten the ideals of your children. Do not darken their outlook of life by hate or disgust against successful undertakers.

It is understandable that many craftsmen whose crafts are flourishing in our town are members of the craft's political party, although they do not direct their affairs according to the scruples of that party and, moreover, they know that this party is always putting obstacles in our way.

The few people who cannot understand that we, either the management of the factory or the employees or other craftsmen in the town and the whole district, must look upon them

as enemies of our work, as people who want to break us and thus threaten our very existence, for some reasons which neither we know nor any of them can explain.

## THE OLD ZLIN

Some of the citizens are sulky over the present management of the town, because the town board does not allow them to build their houses as they wish to do.

Those citizens agree that where there are masses of people there cannot remain narrow, dark lanes as in the past when the place was only a big village.

They recognise that those new masses of people increased many times the value of their property, but cannot still bear to part with those few square metres of land, even if the town offers a very good price for it as it needs for large roads and other beneficial purposes.

In our town we will have still those sorrows in the future. Our town was built by people who did not know life.

In old parts of Zlin we find houses mainly with common thoroughfares and quarrelling neighbours, who are angry with all the world.

Our ancestors did not know that a common thoroughfare is a common hell for all life and that in such houses misery rules, because quarrels and misery group together.

We want to create in our town free human beings who have smiles for all the world, but firstly for their neighbours—men who feel the full pleasures of life.

The most oppressed man does not feel like sharing his bed with others.

For the right freedom of family life is required a dwelling, separated from the neighbours, in the free space of a green garden, air and sun—about the same as we built in our colony.

The connected rows of houses and big tenement houses are only good for spreading diseases.

Of course, inside the town cannot be built parks but it will be our effort that houses from every street should be accessed from wide sidewalks, so that every street can be used for shops and trade, just as we see in our long streets and elsewhere.

To have in those many shops anything to sell and to have always buyers of the goods the future economic development of our town will greatly help.

The town election results in Zlin in the year 1927.

		Votes	Seats
Batamen	...	4553	25
Czechoslovak Socialists	...	155	1
Communists	...	326	2
Catholic party	...	195	1
Social democrats	...	69	...
Craft's party	...	228	1

## **CITIZENS !**

I thank you for your good work.

You again compel me to work for you.

Confidence for confidence, faithfulness for faithfulness.

I invite all of you to co-operate and build a great and glorious Zlin.

Let it be a honour for everyone to be a Zlin citizen.

Honour and prosperity for all.

Let us proclaim three cheers for our Republic and its President.

## **WHY GREAT ZLIN ?**

*During the last 1931 elections Thomas Bata did not speak much. Instead of speeches he attended the meetings with a big book and asked the citizens what they wanted for their town. He took note of those wishes in the book and made from them a big working programme for the next years.*

*The following speech is an interesting document of one of his replies to his opponent:*

You ask me : What benefit will we, old citizens of Zlin, have from that Great Zlin ?

When we won the town election in the year 1923 and when our undertaking began expanding delightfully, Zaludek asked me almost the same question. He said : What benefit do we, old employees, have if from all parts of the world people are rushing here ? At that time he thought how nice it would be if we, old employees, could divide all the money amongst ourselves and close the door before the noses of those hungry strangers.

Zaludek is a smart and honest man. He soon realised that the lives of those two thousand employees we had at that time were more difficult than the lives of twenty thousand.

Two thousand people cannot build such a perfect power house that can produce the cheapest electricity per unit in Europe. Those two thousand people are not sufficient to erect a gas-factory, so that their wives can cook breakfast for 8 hallers without much toil and handling much dirt in place of 45 hallers while heating by coal. They cannot import bananas direct from the port and sell them here for nearly the same price as in the tropics. They cannot build a dam, hospital, and thousands of other things which make life easier and happier. This can be done only by big groups, of course, so long as they are not led by small-minded people.

*After his experiences in the town board Thomas Bata expressed the view that every public self-administrative group should present to the citizens the accounts of its administration. In this he had seen the possibility of making even the political aviation fruitful and useful for the society. The politicians should fight for the people's confidence on the basis of real figures, real programmes and how they were fulfilled in the past.*

*On this basis enters Thomas Bata the third election while he presented to the citizens the accounts and records of his previous*



*work. The result of this third election, 41 out of 48 places gained by Bata's group, confirmed that people understand facts better than tall talks and useless speeches.*

## **MY TASK**

In the last elections you gave me and my friends so much confidence that we were able together with you to lay the foundation for a greater city of Zlin, where living would be an honour and pleasure.

In the next four years we want to reach the task which we put before us—the great Zlin with 50,000 happy and healthy people.

It would not be difficult to create a town with 50,000 people huddled in the barracks or tenement houses without caring as to how their wives and children are living and what opportunities for earning they have in the town.

Our aim is to build a garden town, full of sunshine, water and green grass—a clean town of highest wages, prosperous crafts and business, a town with the best of schools.

It is our endeavour to free all our women from the last traces of physical labour and help them to arrange their homes in which they may take pride.

Therefore, we put our present programme on a wider foundation. In support, we need your highest confidence and co-operation to finish this great task.

There will never be in our Zlin misery and humiliation so long as we shall remain faithful to ourselves, to our work and to our town. Our work will continue to victoriously penetrate into all the world because even the greatest economic crisis and attacks of enemies cannot hold back the people of strong united will, determined to create better life for all.

## **AFTER HIS THIRD ELECTION IN 1931**

I thank you, gentlemen, and I thank all Zlin citizens for the honour which has been done to me by electing me mayor of this town for the third time. It is a great honour to be a member of the town board of Zlin.

The unity of will of citizens, as expressed by our election, is a singular phenomenon in the world's democracy.

Surely we are the only town representatives in all the world who with common and secret voting were elected to the town board without a single member in opposition, because I do not want to see an opposition in our good friend and president of to-day's meeting, M. Rev. Ulehla, who was elected as the Catholic party representative.

Such absolute confidence, which was expressed by all the citizens to us, is not, of course, only the question of honour for which we should brag about ourselves. We must look upon the confidence expressed to us as an obligation, which we take from the hands of our inhabitants to use all our power for the work of welfare of our town and welfare of our inhabitants.

If our citizens wish that we should administrate without opposition, surely they do not wish that we should administrate without justice.

Therefore, we must be fully conscious that even those few citizens in our town whose confidence we have not yet gained and who did not get representation in the town board, have full rights for town justice, and I advise you to hear every voice that calls for justice, and everyone of you to carefully watch this voice as it would be expressed in this committee through their representatives.

The exemplary unity of our citizens is still upset by the difficulties created from the necessity to give away their lands for public purposes. The quick growth of our town brings to every inhabitant a great benefit. But it brings also the necessity of sacrifice, to give for public beneficial purposes part of one's property and thus make possible and ensure the continuous growth of the town.

The benefit from this growth every citizen will accept, but not everyone minds his duty, his obligation which comes out of that. It is our duty that we, elected representatives,

should be an example to our citizens in making such sacrifices in the interest of the public and mitigate quarrels and bitter-  
nesses.

Our town has already become known all over the world. If our industry should keep its position, our town and our district must be rebuilt, changed and improved.

Of course, for this we need more competence, independence and the right to make life in our town and district better.

This right is still refused to us, although it has been promised already by the highest ranks of our state.

I hope that unity and unanimity of our town will assure the government of our state that our town is fit to take into its hands the administration of all our district for the benefit of our town, district, province and all the state.

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VII

STATESMAN



The following few speeches of Thomas Bata created by his participation in the administration of the provinces of Moravia and Silesia cannot be read without emotion. Such, as in their evolution, show the personality and abilities of a statesman, honestly and obstinately trying to find the way and sources of how to make himself and others perfect citizens, who know their needs and the needs of their country and exert every effort to increase the country's glory and prosperity. These are expressions, similar to those of Abraham Lincoln, great in their simplicity, understandable and full of practical idealism, which in all times filled human hearts with a spirit of hope for those political tasks which follow the greatness and unity of citizens. He drew up a programme which, made with energy, love and toughness, made his country one of the most prosperous and most known states on the face of the earth.

Thomas Bata took his duty in the provincial board very seriously and he spent many evenings and Sundays, in the study and at debates about the provincial budget, economic situation and other things, which for all of us who worked with him served as practical training in public administration, politics and national economy.

At the outset it can be said that Thomas Bata tried in provincial and state administrative for:

1. Punctual, understandable and at-the-time accountancy for which would be fully responsible the personalities who by their signatures guaranteed for even a part of it.

2. Removing of economy, in villages and towns, which is dependent on the help from the state or province. For creating certain basis of income from agreemental sources, which depend on the prosperity of province and state, i.e. on the personal abilities of politicians and administrators who prepare and make possible common prosperity.

3. Better settlement of provincial and state debts by the direct help and contact of the citizens. He endeavoured that between the state and the citizen there should not be any middlemen, that citizens, together with financial help, should give to the state also their practical love and his confidence. So the citizen should feel that the

*fate of the state is his own fate, and his property is connected with the state's property. This all should create confidence and gratitude, should give the right authority to the state's leaders which is necessary for realising their tasks. He thought seriously that this revolution in the hearts should be started in the children at schools, and expected from it such relieving of citizen's powers that it would be enough for providing not only sufficient public sources for life, but also control and guarantee of their wise using, i.e. basis of a real democratic state.*

*4. The perfect investment and economic use of all natural resources of the country.*

*5. Better economy of provinces and states enterprising by increase of personal responsibilities of the people in their managements together with increment of the income of the people in those enterprisings, which should be equal with the increased economical results.*

*The following speeches of Thomas Bata throw more light on that aim:*

## **THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTING**

**Citizens!**

I present you here the balance sheet of the town's economies during the year 1928. It is the first balance sheet made in a way that easy understanding of it is not only possible for experts in accountancy, but for every citizen.

According to law, our town must make its accountancy according to a special system, named the Cameral system, from which the town's accountancy can be judged and understood only by expert accountants of the provincial control authorities, by whom town accountancy is controlled. But good accounting must be firstly clear and intelligible to everyone.

Therefore, I arranged that all accounting of our town should be made still according to the Cameral system, as demanded by the control offices, but the figures at the same time are posted on "debits" and "credits" according to normal business accountancy which everybody understands.

It would have been right if I had presented this balance sheet to you just after the New Year when it was ready. But the significance of intelligible publication of the balance sheet I notified, when I stood before the necessity of understanding the balance sheet of our provincial accounting and thus take responsibility for it before the public.

The provincial balance sheet for the year 1928 is made according to the old Cameral accounting system. There is not a single member of the provincial board or even of the financial control board who understands this balance sheet so perfectly as everyone should understand it if one has to take responsibility for it.

I am far from saying that the provincial bills are not right. But I am forced to say that because of the intricate system of accountancy I have not any proof of their correctness. I am faced only to know the responsibilities of my office.

I think it is not right if somebody takes money from me for his work and not even count it. I want him to be satisfied and not just depend upon my honesty. In the same way we must deal with the town, province and the public economy. We must understand and calculate the public accounting and have proof of their correctness. It is our duty and also of those who on our behalf worked for us. For this, of course, we need very clear accounting, one which points out on the paper every move of property every time and from every point of view.

The difference between such accounting and accounting according to the Cameral system comprehends, this anecdote which one of my neighbours told me in the provincial financial board when we were compiling the balance sheet.

The anecdote says :

A village chairman once went to the district town to settle the village's matters. On his way back he was caught by a storm in which he lost his head-dress. Coming back to the village the chairman made a bill in which he put also the cost of the lost hat.



The village municipality agreed to all his expenses, except his charges on the head-dress. The mayor was very angry. He took the bill back and afterwards presented it written according to the Cameral system. All the members were looking for the item. The amount was the same, but the cost of the head-dress could not be seen. The chairman being asked, said, "It is there, but try to find it out yourselves."

I am not of opinion that in our provincial accounting there should be such sums for head-dress, but I am convinced that there are hats and alas ! from the balance sheet, made according to the Cameralistic system they cannot be seen.

The question is how to act according to the present public Cameralistic system of accountancy to derive all the benefits of best business accountancy. Improvements in the present system of accounting must be introduced. They must be simple, and clarify existing complications with the use of accounting machines, which according to the Cameralistic system is not possible.

If you ask the reason why this or that thing is put in a complicated way, you always get the reply : It is because that by such accounting we have not to pay uselessly high taxes. In other words, the accounting should be for the tax-controller and collector uncontrollable. And also you may have heard that owing to clear and understandable accounting of some provincial or municipal enterprises the customers demanded reduction of prices of their products.

All these arguments are unreasonable and also bear the germ of failure or very little success. It is not by chance that the undertakers who keep similar accounts often fall down, or are in misery.

If the undertaker keeps his bills in such a way that Mr. Tax Collector does not understand them, we may be convinced that he and his people at the end will not understand them also, *i.e.* they will manage their undertaking in the dark.

It is true, as they say, that light costs money, that they will have to pay more taxes, that employees are not satisfied and demand higher wages. But the most expensive of all is the darkness which comes from the failure to understand the accounts. From it comes wretchedness for all—for employees and employers and also for the tax collector.

The public economy is in many ways a teacher for private economy. It is firstly so when the budget is prepared. If this would be an example also in the clear accounting technique, what poverty, moral and material, would come from it for all the province !

Even the best people in the government are not able to make better the financial position of the municipality, district, province or state, as long as they do not know perfectly and from all sides the real financial position. It will be for us not only a great honour, but also a great benefit if the example of our town accounting and its publication will benefit for amelioration not only of our town, but all self-government institutions.

## PROVINCIAL BUDGET AND INVESTMENT

*Thomas\* Bata's speech in the provincial board on the occasion of his presenting one million crowns to the province for increasing the number of telephones.*

The budget of our province is very poor, same as its inhabitants. All the speakers here will agree that the situation of the province is threatening.

I found the sign of danger firstly in the moral standpoint of the state towards the province and of the province towards the municipalities.

The state, instead of taking care and looking upon the provincial economy like a careful father, is dealing with the provinces more like an enemy.

But in the same way the province is treating its municipalities. In the budget you can find that the taxes bring less

amount to the province than the cost of their collection, although the municipalities can collect them practically without any expense.

This is firstly true about the music tax, then fishing and many others. Some such taxes were already given to the municipalities, but they must still pay to the provincial tax collecting office 15% for the regie with collecting, although the municipality can collect them almost without any expenses and without delay, while the provincial tax collecting office collects them in some cases even three years after the date of expiry.

So let us begin with ourselves. Let us be even on this score an exemplary province. Let us leave to the municipalities in our provincial budget at least those taxes, which bring loss to the province or a very small benefit.

In that way we can make at least some municipalities self-sufficient; we will liberate them from taking charity from our funds, which is as humiliating to them as the state's contribution is to us.

The largest drawback in the budget I see is that it is not based on personalities, that it is anonymous so to say.

The budget is, of course, signed by the Reverend Dronby and by the President, but the detailed budget concerning mainly the provincial institutions and undertakings is not signed by those to whom the province gives the responsibility for managing them.

It is sure that amongst them there are people who for their exceptional good work merit public recognition and huge material rewards, but of whom this budget is not crediting them. If they were honoured we would have created in those people real interest and sense of responsibility.

The public finances we can improve only if we can increase the earning abilities of the inhabitants.

It causes envy to see that the Dutch or Danish farmer earns several times more than our farmer, while his main product, milk and butter, are cheaper than here.

The success of every production in modern times is due to telephone, electricity, aqueducts, roads, railways and transport system and those main production sources, alas, cannot make anything alone. Those sources are lying in our hands and, in the hands of the state.

With our great poverty we must think of getting those sources which will cost us very small sums, but they will make production much easier for the people.

In the first place telephone is needed. On this score our province is remarkably poor. In our country one telephone apparatus belongs to 140 people, while elsewhere one telephone belongs to 7 to 10 people.

Telephone can even make the illiterate savage a business man and increase his prosperity and that of his neighbours.

In Africa near an oasis I found a man sitting on the ground with a telephone apparatus on his lap. His business was selling of water and buying of skins. He explained how he got the telephone. Once an officer came from a private telephone company, stretched the wires, gave the telephone apparatus in his hands and explained to him how to speak into it. While leaving he said : "After six months I will come back and take either the money or the telephone." While saying this, the native took the telephone and declared he would never part with his speaking box at any cost.

It was but natural. The wire connected him with the post office, railway station, skin-dealers and although he did not know how to write, he could settle his business through the telephone.

In our present life we depend upon each other. Work is divided in such a way that its success does not depend always on us only. Therefore, mutual understanding is necessary for us and that is why the speaking box (telephone) was invented.

In our provincial budget we are making provision for large sums for farmers' schools. But farmers' schools without telephones are nearly without value. To the farmers' schools are coming young lads who have in their heads entirely other things than agricultural problems, as it is in youngsters everywhere. The farmer is too occupied with agricultural problems and has no time to go to school.

In this respect the telephone can greatly help. When a farmer does not know how to solve some problems he connects himself with the agricultural school. The teacher can tell him: "Just the same problem or trouble such and such farmer had last year. I gave him such advice and he said it helped him. Better speak to him directly over the telephone."

The telephone helps the right word to come in the right moment and in the right place. The telephone is a necessity for every village. The smaller the village, the more it depends on the help of other villages or towns, so does the doctor, veterinary surgeon, fire brigade, etc.

Telephones can be given to our inhabitants without any provincial sacrifice, because telephone is an earning factor. It is only necessary that the provincial board should form a special board which will help to instal the telephones where inhabitants, due to either big indigence or not having sufficient explanation of its utility, have not yet got telephones.

The board together with the postal department will make estimates for installing telephones in every village.

The expenses for lines will be divided among the villages and will help those villages to get credit which cannot pay for the telephone from their usual incomes.

Our undertaking is thankful to telephone for its big prosperity. Out of gratitude to this invention we decided to give free to that telephone board three thousand apparatus or one million crowns for installing telephones in the poorest schools and villages.

I conclude with asking to vote for my offer that the provincial board should form a special telephone committee if the representatives accept my contribution for installing telephones in every village.

## **ARRANGEMENT OF PROVINCIAL FINANCES**

*This manifesto was published in 1929 together with detailed proposals in figures and statistics and documents.*

The passivity of our provincial economy is the question of morality and question of will. There is no doubt that we all want to remove the cause of failure of provincial finances but none of us have developed so much intuition as is necessary for reaching this goal.

Our explanations that the present grave situation of provincial economy is due to the relation of provincial economy to the state, are and will remain only as useless talks.

The fault lies only with ourselves. Why? Did we not make from our villages those beggars who cry for settlement of their deficits from the settlement fund, just in the same way as we allowed the state to claim settlement from us?

Even those places whose citizens were not long ago proud of sound economic position of their towns or villages, sacrifice that pride for the hope of getting charity from the provincial adjustment fund and proclaim themselves bankrupts.

For this state of affairs law No. 77 was not solely responsible. Up till now we took from that law only the bad side. This law does not forbid the adjustment fund taking in itself permanently the fulfilment of those tasks which financially weak villages and towns cannot fulfill themselves. By such a step we might bring back to the villages the consciousness and sense of duty to be self-sufficient. By publishing how the funds were distributed, we would free all the villages from the hope that the more they will spend, the more they would get.

For this it is necessary to be strictly observed that the adjustment fund should be used where the biggest bravery is needed in the face of permanently refused petitioners, for whom nothing was left.

But bravery, which is essential to check our downward tendency of freeing our villages from petitioning, and work we will need for freeing our province from the tendency of applying to the state for help.

None of us really believe that the state wishes our humiliation and diligence. The fatal standpoint, which the state has towards us, was taken for the same reason, as our standpoint towards the villages.

Let us prove that amongst us, either among the members of the provincial board or among the officials and employees of the province, there are sufficient brave men, able to prepare a financial plan for reaching the goal of self-sufficiency for our province.

In the proposals, published below, I point out the principles according to which the next provincial budget should be made, so that the province can make its administrative works easier and reach a strong financial basis. In the budget, made on that basis, the provincial expenditure will be reduced by about 87 million crowns, which means mainly the amount of subscription of province to schools.

*Now follow the detailed plan for provincial budget.*

The manifesto adds :

It is only right that the province should get its income from those sources which help to build up. All the expenses of the province should follow the aim: to better economy for all the citizens in the province. After all, the taxes are paid from the economic activities of the citizens.

The expenses of the province for electrification, special schools, for control of village economy, have only one aim : the increase of income of the citizens, increasing production, better crafts, trade, industry, agriculture from all of which come the income taxes to the state's coffers. In the present arrangement the province has no really determined share on those incomes.

But always the provincial, social and sanitary expenses follow the same aim. The health of the citizens is firstly the basis of every economic prosperity and thus also of taxes. Therefore, on every provincial expenses should be looked as on every prospective investments directed for the increment of citizens' income and thus their tax-paying capability. It would be absolutely wrong and unhealthy for the state and for the province if all the harvest grown from this seed would be alicuated (means "taken away") from those who spend on it.

The alms which the state gives to the province from those incomes, retards the material failure of the province, but accelerates moral failure, because it takes away from the citizens courage and initiative.

Therefore, I propose that our provincial committee should negotiate with the state about the arrangement of provincial finances.

To reach sharply the healthy and beneficial relation of provincial economy towards the villages and towards the state, we need enthusiastic provincial employees. The enthusiasm and willingness for brave, generous work, without which nothing great can be achieved in this world, we can attain only if we convince them that we want at the same time to build also their economic independence and success along with economic independence of our province. It must be clear to everyone that we want to take such care of them as we wish them to take of provincial economy. It is our duty to find the way how to reward the employees who practised economy according to the influence and effort they exerted to effect it.

My dedication for instalment of telephones.



First it was the aim of this my impulse to instal telephones in those villages which have not got them as yet.

## WHY I AM AGAINST THE PROVINCIAL LOAN

*This expression, by which Thomas Bata stands firstly against the general view of the provincial committee, consists of the most practical expression of his views in the provincial management and citizen's duty.*

At the meeting of the provincial representatives on 18th December, 1929, I demanded that permission for this loan be refused. Every proceedings about public finances and loans should be made known to all the inhabitants. Therefore, I feel it my duty to explain before the public why I objected to this loan.

All the speakers who supported acceptance of this loan agreed that it should serve to cover our debts, for which the province is not responsible,—debts which were incurred because the state took from the province some of its incomes and piled up more obligations on its shoulders. They held that for five years, it was not possible to make an agreement with the government and state for transfer of those debts to the state, and it was also said that with the introduction of this loan we must demonstrate our protest.

I hold that I do not want to demonstrate against the state and that the loan is not an acceptable object for demonstration, I have full confidence in our government and I believe that it is possible to come to an agreement with the government to some reasonable arrangement of our provincial finances.

I do not believe that our provincial representative Reverend Dronby cannot coincide with the state minister Mr. Sramek, our representative Mr. Stoupal with the Prime Minister Udrzal, our Mr. Hnatik with the state minister Bechyne, in short, the representatives of our province with the state ministers. It is only the people, nobody else, who represent the government

of our Republic same as the provincial committee and management of our provinces, Moravia and Silesia. Their agreement about the necessities of the inhabitants can be at any moment made into law, because, after all, even laws are made by the people.

I am convinced, as all Moravians are, that it is only the question of will, manliness and persistency on the side of the Republic's government, same as on the side of the provincial management, that is needed to come to an agreement about life's necessities as well as the way for development of Moravia and Silesia.

The agreement, as I think, should be on these lines : The state will take certain portions of our debt of 200 millions for which we were not instrumental. Then the provincial committee will make an agreement with the state government about the height of percentage which the state should leave for the province from the collected taxes. The realisation of these two things will give us an amount which we forfeit on our provincial accounts. The loan for settling the standing debts we can introduce, when the figures that come out from the agreement with the state will be known, because only then we can know how the province will pay interests and instalments on that loan. The province without a firmly based income is not at all capable of introducing any loan.

For ensuring economic prosperity of the country we can introduce the loan easily amongst the inhabitants, even at a very low rate of interest, without banker's provision. Such a loan will be welcomed by our citizens as the best opportunity for expressing their active patriotism. The provincial loan papers, created on the most strict moral basis, are the right multipliers of citizens' virtues. Such loan schemes can be sent to the school principals for being a subject of teaching on practical citizens' doctrines. There would not be a single class in the province where pupils would not save money for at least one provincial paper. But firstly for us, members of the provincial board, it will be our duty to begin with our

selves and purchase such papers as well as help to push their sale as much as possible. Such provincial loan papers will give the citizens not only interest, but also the prestige of being a creditor of their province and the owner of the best papers in the world. This moral value cannot miss any single prosperous country and it cannot be obtained from any single bank or exchange.

I do not believe that proceedings between the state and our province about mutual agreement of economic relations must take years. If the men, who know well our provincial economy, will make their proposals such that they themselves with clear minds can sign them, if they would take responsibility as ministers and state representatives, then such proceedings could be successfully ended within a few hours.

While I go through the proceedings in the financial commission and the provincial board and see those heaps of proposals for financial help there and everywhere, I feel it difficult to vote against them, because the necessity is expressed in every line. I am not of the view that savings should begin in orphans' asylums, hospitals and schools. Savings should begin with the provisions and interests and with this end in view my proposals are directed.

In this way the hands, heads and all the energies of provincial management will be freed for productive services to the inhabitants : betterment of hospitals, orphans' asylums, betterment of roads, perfection of schooling and education, in short, those actions which lead towards economic, physical, moral and cultural prosperity of the province.

## **THE MAIN PROBLEMS OF PROVINCIAL ECONOMY**

In the work for betterment of the economic situation of our province great success was achieved during the last period.

The deputation of the provincial board members led by the provincial president Dr. Cerny found in the state ministry full understanding and eagerness to solve the question of

provincial debts, for which the province is not responsible, and to put the financial position of the province on a more sound basis.

According to these principles the provincial economy should be directed and the new arrangement will mean the stabilization of provincial budget on the basis of 350 millions of Czechoslovak crowns annually.

It is proper that we, Moravians and Silesians, should be thankful for that goodwill, and try to put our economy in the right way. We have all reasons to give full confidence to the work of the state financial minister, because we know that this move is directed not only by the patriotic heart of an excellent statesman but also by the heart of a Moravian who knows well the necessities of our province.

The province of Moravia by its natural rich resources and in its position is one of the most beautiful lands on the earth.

I fully appreciate the effort of our Finance Minister for the stoppage of its deficit budgets. But I have in my mind that the budget of the province, which is so rich from nature and also such uncared for, cannot be stabilized, on the contrary it must increase in income and expenditure year by year.

This increase of income could be reached if the province would have the possibility to draw its incomes from those sources which alone help to create and rise up.

Amongst the most steady sources of income are the direct taxes, i.e., the taxes from consumption, income and turnover taxes. It does not matter in which one of those taxes the province will share by a certain percentage, but it is very important that the province should draw its income directly from some of those taxes. This question should be settled permanently so that there may be no quarrel about it every year and the province may clearly know with what sum she will have to pull on. One party should not be left to lament on begging and the other to be angry for extortioning.

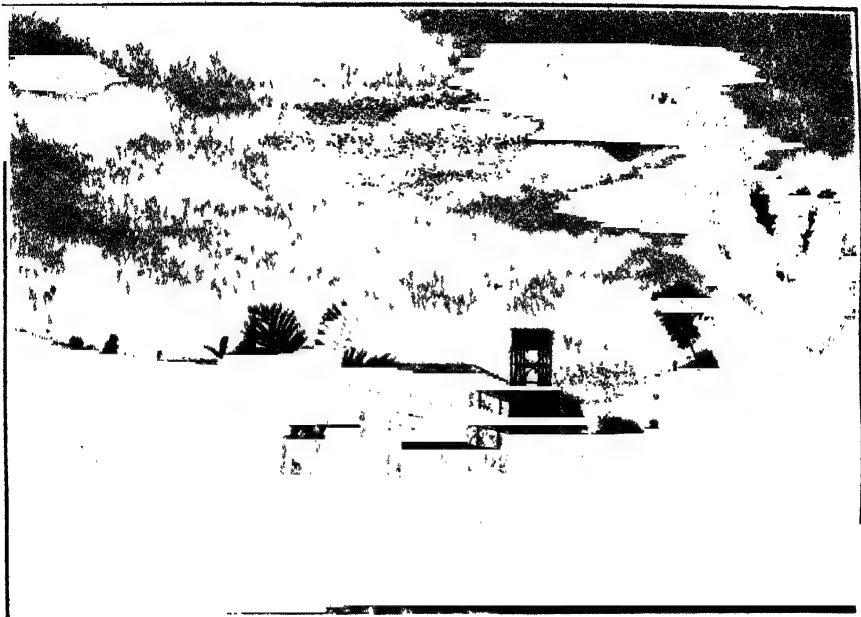
The problem is that unproductive quarrelling for financial help amongst the provinces should be turned into graceful contests between them. Every province of our Republic should be the first and best in at least one thing and thus be a teacher as well as a pupil for others—as it is in the Western countries—and united in the state's groups.

The state, the province and even the village pay their expenses from one source : from public money. Thus it is to their common interest to gain the best income out of it. The economy by which the province as well as the villages, while making the budget, are dependent and even calculate the help in the form of alms from the states' coffers— as was up till now—is harmful for the state as well as for the province, because it takes away from the provinces and villages the initiative to govern their economy in such a way that income from taxes should be always increasing and thus the debts should be fully covered by credits.

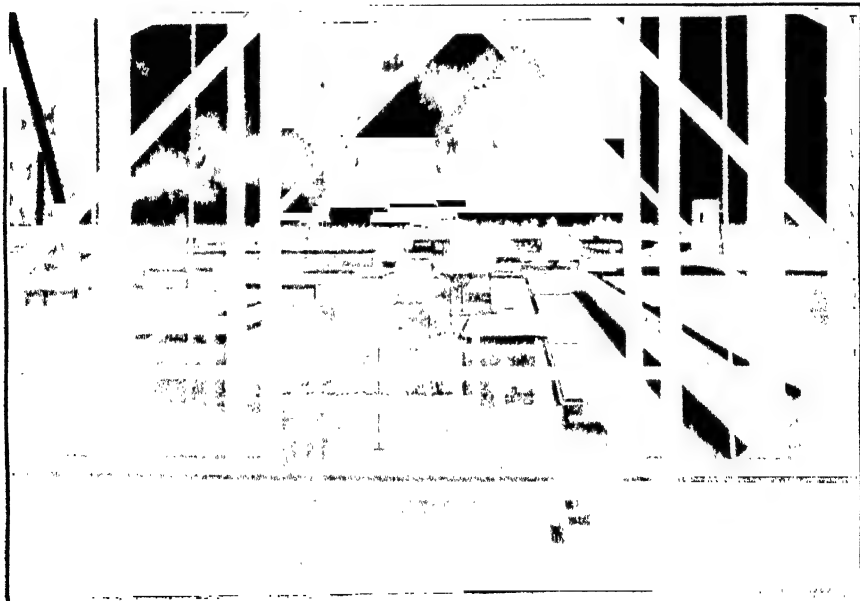
In our present budget for the year 1930, which is about 350,000,000 our province calculated with the investments of 30 millions only, which is absolutely insufficient. The establishment of mutual relationship between the state and provinces will give to the province not only income but will create also legal and moral basis for investments of hundreds of millions, which our province so much needs for using her great natural richness, improving the life's standard of the inhabitants and thus increase their productivity and paying capacity.

The provision of the trifling sum of thirty millions for investments in our province is the expression of pessimism on the part of our leading personalities in the present system of our economy.

It is necessary to add that they have for their pessimism sound reasons. I came to know about it during my investigation about the building of a new school in Jaroslavice, a village near Zlin, and I must apologise to the provincial and district



Eastern side of the Batanagar factories showing the godowns and the despatching departments

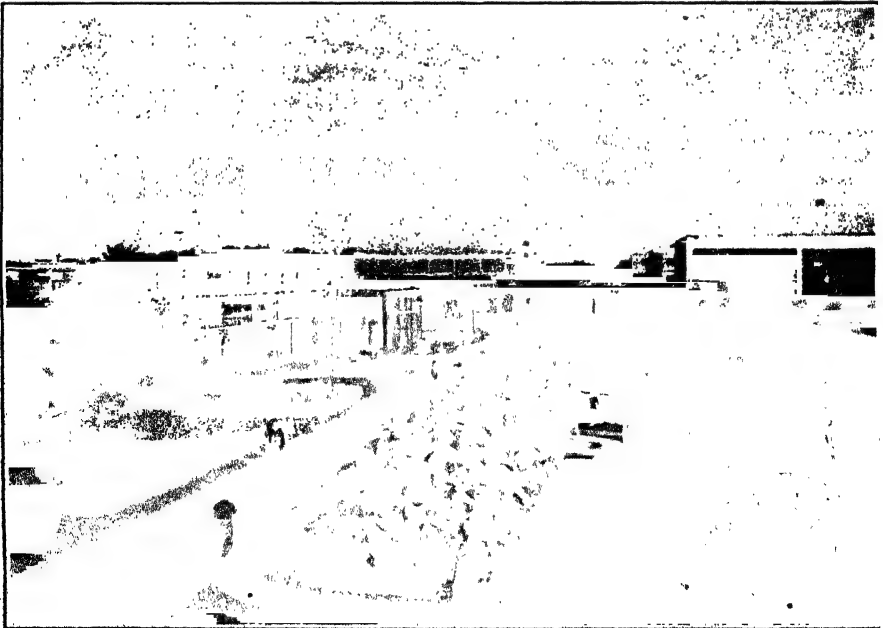


A snapshot of the Batanagar factory buildings, from the roof of the three storey godown building.



Plenty of light, air and sunshine, vast open spaces, gardens, flower-beds, clean red factory buildings connected by a network of dustproof roads—these are the principles on which is built the Batanagar factory.

In the picture is seen a part of the Administration Building amidst gardens.



commission for my reproofs, because I thought they pressed this village for investments which are much above its paying capacity.

I am convinced that it was inexperience and lack of real knowledge for solving the school problems in a sound way that is responsible for this state of affairs. To cite an example let me state:

The small village of Jaroslavice needs a school, as the children have to walk three miles to the nearest school. For their eighty children a school with two classes would have been sufficient at the start, but so arranged that the school could be extended if it was so needed with the growth of the village.

The village of Jaroslavice has an income of about 2,700 crowns annually. The village property is insignificant. The villagers started building the school with 19,000 crowns as capital. Neither their chairman nor a single member of the village board, or any of their inhabitants had built in their life such a building. Therefore, it is natural that they were wanting in experience.

They decided to build a three class school for 257,000 crowns. When the building was ready, they found that the school had cost them totally 526,000 crowns.

And so the village of Jaroslavice erected a nice piece of art but, in such a way that it became the source of their misery. Even after 200 years the village will not be able to pay for this costly building from its income. Now they depend on the generosity of public sources.

But those sources are meant also for other villages, which are also wanting in schools. Here we see that the expensive school building in Jaroslavice deprived at least three other villages of the possibility of receiving help from the public, i.e., provincial and state financial help for building their schools.



Such cases are discouraging for provincial boards in respect of investments for building schools. They know fully well that in such a way cannot be built schools in our province. But at the same time we cannot build them by absolute negativity and stoppage of school-investments, because schools we must have.

I think that this question must be positively solved. I am of opinion that provincial offices should arrange to make plans and estimates for different types of schools by the best experts of the state so that the citizens can derive some knowledge from them. Those plans can serve as the basis for estimates and prevent the village from having to contract any such engagements the fulfilment of which might put generations into misery.

The building and educational experts of our undertaking in Zlin prepared plans of such schools with detailed budgets. According to those plans the cost of a school with one class is 40,000 crowns; addition of a second class being 36,000 crowns in which sum is calculated a good profit for the constructor.

If Jaroslavice would get such plans before starting building her school she would have been able to build it for 76,000 crowns and at the most 114,000 crowns with the house for the school principal.

We are sending 100 copies of the prepared plans with detailed budgets for a school with the principal's house to the provincial offices for their immediate needs.

From this example it is clearly seen that for good investment better plans and estimates are more necessary than money. The village Jaroslavice, which has to pay interest from its debts, will pay during two years 7 per cent from 50,000—70,000 crowns of interest. With the addition of 44,000 they might build even a house for the principal along with the school building.

When we made those plans for schools and showed them to experts, they told us that such plans for schools and such principles of building are long in vogue in America. We applied them and will present them to the provincial authorities for comparison.

And as in building schools such plans, thoroughly made by perfect experts, are necessary for all other branches of work.

I was consoled when during the last meeting of the provincial board the past directorate promised to prepare and present within six months a general detailed project for continuous installation of telephones in all the villages of our province.

Such general projects are necessary for the building of aqueducts in all the villages which have not got them, for regulation of rivers, building hospitals, etc. It is necessary to make investments for the increment of agricultural and craft's output. Equally important it is to prepare and estimate plans for building roads, mainly district roads. For that work the district magistrates with their officers, are not sufficient. The transferring, repairing and building of new roads are necessary to solve from the transport point of view of all provinces and states, and therefore it is necessary to prepare those plans and estimates in the provincial offices.

The most sublime task of leading personalities in the province and state is to wake up the capabilities of the inhabitants and to direct those powers to their own aid and to the state for prosperity. The only mediate for this task is to let live those self-managed groups (i.e. villages, towns) from their own sources only. From the contest of strong life, which thus will rise up, will be made strong and capable unions in perfect existence. But even those most weak villages thus can gain much better existence than now, when all, weak and powerful, depend on the presents and alms from the state's safe.

The quarrels and dissensions which now so much fill up public life and engage the brains of the leading men in thinking of ways how to gain as much as possible of presents, will

completely disappear when villages and provinces, same as groups of citizens, will be living on the results of their work and thus they will think of preparing plans as to how to gain more and how to make life more perfect.

## THE VALUE OF CITIZENS' HONOUR

*Speech of Thomas Bata at the district conference of teachers on 15-11-1930.*

In our economic and political life was not introduced properly one currency : that currency is HONOUR. Many people are convinced that they can get everything for money. is not true. Much more can one get for honour.

If we want to assure prosperity for all we must put this currency—honour—into circulation. This I had had in my mind when in the provincial board during the discussion about giving help to the provincial finances by a loan of 250 millions through banks, I said :

"The province must not pay any provisions to the bankers, must not suffer any loss on the exchange. The province must get the necessary money from the inhabitants and at a low interest of 5 per cent only."

I declared that under this condition the inhabitants of Zlin are ready to purchase the provincial loan papers by a sum much higher than should go on them according to the number of inhabitants, and even ten times more. But loan on unnecessary interest—not a single crown !

I said also that our bankers will be teachers and pupils. Surely only very few people will understand what I meant by those words, because this way of getting money in our country is rather unusual. I thought that we might give to the creditor at this time a small portion of honour besides 5 per cent of interest and I hope that later, when we will have taught our inhabitants to value honour even in economic affairs, we will find such creditors in large numbers who will be satisfied with less interest but a higher measure of honour.

I had had in my mind firstly schools, because the germ of better times founded on nobler feelings for national blessing can best be imbibed in youths.

The loan created should firstly be introduced to schools. There is really no better system of teaching than when the teacher surveys the economic situation of the province and there cannot be better expression of patriotic feeling and understanding for collective life than when pupils will convert their savings into papers of the province for the good of the province, good of the country.

Our pupils, of course, cannot take the whole 250 million crowns, but they can introduce the loan to the families together with the knowledge of provincial economy; they will calculate to their parents that the province will save yearly 15-20 million crowns if the inhabitants will save their money in loan paper under at least such conditions by which they deposit money in banks.

Then this knowledge should be widespread amongst the inhabitants. It is necessary that the provincial board should arrange to send statistics about provincial economy to the school and that school-boards should allow teaching about public problems and economy, not only provincial, but also district and village economy.

The calculation of savings on interest, if from all provincial debts will be at 5 per cent interest, for 500,000,000 crowns is 25,000,000 crowns of annual interest.

Up till now we pay 40,000,000.

The result in the beginning will be an annual saving of 15,000,000—expressed in figures, when we will introduce the currency of honour amongst our inhabitants.

But the mint for the coinage of honour should be in the hands of the inhabitants, and that will be more beneficial. For, it is with them that the responsibility of our public affairs rests.

I think we must make many coins of honour to pay all our old debts.

Everyone of us engaged in our daily work does not even think who manages the affairs of our Moravian and Silesian provinces. Especially we do not recognize that the increasing prosperity of this province is made possible due only to the personal sacrifices of a man who is at the head of its management.

We do not even think that such sacrifices should also be paid for. But what to pay them ? Money ?

For legal pay is done legal work, and that is eight hours a day. At least some of us know what would become of us and what would be the situation, if our leading men worked only eight hours a day. These are times when our safety, our legal security and order demand continuous work for many days and nights.

It is necessary that those sources and terms of our well being should be put for consideration in our schools and from there they should be widespread amongst the citizens, because only by such a way will we be able to pay, for the overtime work done by our leading men, the only coins payable—our love and gratitude.

During the last expression of our love and devotion to our President Masaryk we recognized what great things can be paid for great work. I do not want to say that our debt towards the President Masaryk we have already paid, but at least we have begun paying it by small instalments. But towards many men who work for us in leading, responsible positions, we have not yet started paying those instalments of our debts.

Such love and gratitude in Moravia and Silesia deserve from us firstly the Provincial President Mr. Jan Cerny and in our district, the Chairman of the District Board, Dr. Janustik.

Our Moravian citizen, the President Cerny, was not able during the last few years to engage himself only in the settlement of important provincial matters, because his wide

experience, knowledge and statesmanship were necessary for solving all the great tasks of the state. Now he comes back to us in Moravia and I fully hope that all our problems will be fully and happily settled in the shortest possible time.

I wish only that he should remain in his post as long as possible and I wish that we by our love and gratitude should fasten to us that able, honest and generous man.

By the cultivation of provincial patriotism I do not want to gain our provincial president only for our district. It would not be sincere and honest for our district. I see the right expression of our patriotism in that when we take the biggest portion of obligation with the knowledge that rewards will come to us alone afterwards.

I calculated that payment by citizens through honour will make at once a profit of 15 million crowns annually for the province, but the benefit of payment by love and gratitude of the inhabitants for his sacrifices for their benefit, cannot be valued at all.

Such love makes even the desert a paradise. It helps those men with their work, increases their power, warms up their spirit. It performs miracles. And in our country such miracles are so much necessary to overtake all those things by which war and after-war confusions were made.

To make it possible to increase the present little productivity of the land, it is necessary that immediately an agreement between the province and the state about the economic principles should be reached. That every village should get a telephone and everywhere better and fuller life should be helped to grow.

That the crystal water of our mountain streams should be taken by aqueducts to the level, to the places where due to lack of good water diseases worse than wars are prevalent.

That our rivers should be regulated and made navigable.

That our lands should be scientifically cultivated.

That roads and railways should be constructed everywhere.

Do not think that we are deficient in money for all those things. The realization of all these necessities will cost, of course, hundreds of millions, but thousands of millions it will bring back as benefit. It is only the problem of leading men and of all of us, and this problem must help us to increase our love and gratitude to all who sacrifice themselves for us.

## BETTER ARRANGEMENT OF WATER ECONOMY IN MORAVIA

*In the year 1930 the Czechoslovak government prepared schemes for a new law by which the arrangement and irrigation of the different provinces of the state could be directed up to the year 1956. After a study of these proposals Thomas Bata found that the Moravian province was entirely ignored, only 4 million crowns of the total estimated budget having been apportioned to it.*

*Finding that the reason of depriving his province from a fair share was due to the unpreparedness of necessary plans due to ignorance of some persons and owing to difference of opinion, Thomas Bata started a quick movement for gaining in the last minute as big a share as possible. "Within this week," he said to his engineers and publicists in a conference, "we must do for the irrigation of our rivers much more than has been done during the last millions of years." All old plans were taken up, finding and studying, comparisons, conferences, discussions, calculations—all done in great haste for days and nights without rest. From the air he studied the course of the main river Morava, made changes in plans, came in contact with peasants and farmers living on the river's banks. From all this came out a detailed programme for waterways and the possibility of making the Morava navigable which in these days has already been realised.*

*When he had to decide whether he should erect another plant on the small hills or on the plain along the banks of the Morava, he chose the plain although there was danger of terrific floods from the*



Batamen—followers of the ideals of work and service of Thomas Bata—in India. Six and a half thousand of them have devoted themselves for building Batanagar as one great living monument to the immortal memory of their late chief, whose ideas they are realizing now for the benefit of their own and that of whole India.





Around the factory buildings there are parks and playgrounds for small and big citizens of Batanagar. On those parks and open places the Batanagar Band entertain the public with concerts twice a week.



One of the standard factory buildings amidst the green of gardens and trees.

*springs, and immediately started construction of the factory and at the same time the construction of a river dike. But here the current was very treacherous. One autumn day he found that terrible waves of muddy water were rushing round the unfinished large plants, damaging buildings, materials, machinery, and all equipment and putting his many years' work into ruins.*

*At the last dike, the top of which was like an island still above the rushing water, were hundreds of rabbits from the nearby forest, which was overflowed. Bata stood silent for hours, looked at this scene of destruction, then sharply turned back. "And I will not run away in fear of that water like those rabbits. People here have been running away for thousands of years. If I also do like that the water will not cease its devastations. Let us start again."*

*To-day stands at that place, near the irrigated river with no danger of floods, a great Bata sister plant, which employs about 20,000 people.*

## **MORAVIANS !**

Is there a more important question than how to better our life and make it more pleasant ? How to lighten the work of peasants and increase the output of their lands and meadows ? How to free people working in industry from toiling and increase their wages by the help of mechanical powers and powers of nature ? How to make our villages and towns healthy and how to help our children grow up into healthy, strong citizens ?

It is our duty to think of these problems and to solve them.

Never will we go even one step further in the creation of prosperity of the inhabitants of the Moravian and Silesian provinces as long as we will not discipline ourselves.

Look at the situation of our country on the map !

The Providence of God and the wisdom of our pastime statesmen centralised all our province near one river. By the happy political situation we have in our hands the control of the source, same as over the mouth of this river which is

only a few miles away from our provincial border in Slovakia near Decin. Natural and political powers thus have connected us with the great international river, Danube, on which our state has a right for navigation and through which we can navigate to the southern countries and seas all through the year.

There is not a second land whose future prosperity depends so much on the only river Morava.

And what have we, Moravians, done with this property given to us by God's Providence and thousands of years defended by the inhabitants of this country? What use have we made of it? If you fly over the southern part of the wilderness, you will find the river wasting her blissful powers as she did during the times of the Mammoths. While in similar places in other countries are prosperous towns, huge factories, highly prosperous farms, nice houses and healthy, rich people, here you will see only misery—here or there scattered huts, overflowed by water and the poorest of inhabitants. Far away, many miles from the river, on the hills there are small factories and human abodes where people bore very deep wells to get water. But during the summer months they dry out. Then begins typhoid and other infectious diseases, of which thousands yearly fall sick and thousands die.

There are districts where the situation is really dangerous. For many months in the year in the villages near Hodonin it is neither possible for people nor for cattle to go to the fields, because mosquitoes swarming in clouds from the Moravian sloughs govern the district, where in jungles even animals die from mosquito bite. Just as there are dangerous diseases prevalent in the tropical jungles, so also in the heart of Europe there is a bad sickness called Hodonin fever. Therefore, it is not surprising that the best fields serve only as pasture ground and many miles away people try to cultivate fields full of pebbles only to get nearly half the harvest they could get from the fertile fields near the river.

The fault for this miserable condition is ours, ours alone.

In the former Austro-Hungarian Empire the Parliament of Vienna needed the assent of Czech and Moravian members for building the Alpine railways which were needed for the transport of the Austrian army for an attack against Italy. They had to gain the votes of our members in return for certain benefits.

The Czech representatives, who better realised the problem of their land, demanded regulation for the navigation of their land, demanded regulation for the navigation of their main rivers Elbe and Vltava. Although for many decades not a little ship was visible on those rivers, still the inhabitants have had no reason to be angry with their representatives, because by regulation of rivers they gained control over all waterways of their land.

The influx and building of dams was regulated to remove two evils ; High level of water during the floods and low level during the summer. This can satisfy every Czech peasant, because he can now build his house directly on the river bank without fear of his stable with cattle being washed away. He has no longer to rush to the hill and pump water from deep wells.

What have we, Moravians, done ? What have our representatives done in the Viennese parliament ? They accept only promises from the Viennese gentlemen for the Odra-Danube Canal, which should be a magnificent thing, but chances for the realisation of which are very remote. And our rivers are still uncared for, and those lands—which by the activities of a reasonable man, namely Dr. Sileny, were at least a little regulated—are again going to ruin by the negligence of our generation.

The reason for our failure is best seen from the proposals about the waterway fund, which should be decisive for the arrangement of water economy in the whole state and which we republish.

About the provinces of Moravia and Silesia the scheme makes only a passing mention as about unknown lands where waterway questions are left for solution to private undertakers, who, they say, might realise the Danube-Elbe-Odra canal.

The state should provide also from our province the four milliard crowns. From that money is estimated the canalisation of rivers, which should serve only for local transports, as for instance, the upper part of the Elbe, Berounka up to Pilzen, Sazava river, etc.

We do not want to reproach those proposals that want to regulate those parts of rivers which are not so important. But it is painful for us that Moravia has been treated like an unknown country, that things of vital importance to the people of Moravia have been discussed only in a few words and only a very small amount, which is next to nothing, has been apportioned for her, that here again the old story of the canal has been told and the solution of the most important things of the province has been left to private undertakers of the future. It is painful that the recommendations betray great disinterest towards the inhabitants of this province.

And still the problem of navigating the river Morava is not a local problem, as it is about other rivers. It is more than a problem of the province, or a problem of the state. It is an European problem, and we may say even the world's problem, because by navigating the Morava we shall be nearer the possibility of connecting the three biggest central European rivers, viz. Elbe, Danube, Odra, and canal connections of two seas.

We do not want to prove the desirability of making the Morava navigable by wrong figures. We say honestly that river navigation, even of the Morava although a hundred times more beneficial than any other local river, will not cover all the expenses for its regulation. We honestly say that it is our intention to put in order by the help of the Waterway Fund, the water economy of our province in the same way as it exists in the sister Czech province. Every reasonable man knows that there is no better financial investment than this, because

money so invested will come back ten times. There is no necessity of producing any artificial figures about the benefit of navigation, because besides navigation there are the productivity of fields, benefit from water-power, profit from harvest, higher output of land and mainly the development of life and undertaking on the river banks. As during the Vienesese Government, and even now, we are forced to look for our life's necessities to the railways. The men who know what they want say that they will finish the arrangements of water economy in their country by navigating the rivers. Those men know that "navigation" in the present situation cannot pay all the expenses—expenditures of building dams and regulating the courses of rivers. They know that "navigation" accounts for hardly one-tenth of the budget and that the calculation is really authentic because regulation of rivers, building of dams and sluices must be made even if the rivers would not serve for navigation. Navigation *de facto* is the next object of the total arrangement of the water situation in the country.

Those men quite rightly under the heading "navigation" want to put all their water economy into order.

About the provinces of Moravia and Silesia it is said that their "navigation" will serve only "private capital." It is surely more easy to refuse life's necessities by provinces only giving promises to do this and leaving everything to the superstition of people—than really meet their demands.

Here is the real picture of all of us, Moravians, because we cannot expect that somebody will think of us and what we need for our life to-day and to-morrow.

\* Let us renounce the gigantic project of canal, which Vienna needed a long time ago and which already once served to bluff the people.

Let us demand such a solution of the problem of constructing waterways in Moravia, which will serve the peasant and farmer as also the man from the workshop—agriculture and industry equally.

This will best satisfy the navigation problem of Moravia details of which one of our best experts Prof. Ing. A. Smrcek presents in his booklet "Moravia's navigation." Another expert, Ing. Suk also has prepared a book on the navigation of Moravia. From his plan is seen that by navigating the Morava floods will be removed even during the highest level of the river. But his plan keeps also water in the river even during the driest days at a depth of at least 210 cm. which makes navigation possible for boats up to 1,000 tons. But what is most important in his study is the possibility of scientific irrigation of fields near the river, which will be made by the help of 22 sluices. This irrigation it will be possible to regulate and will give the farmer the possibility to water his elds and meadows at the time when he needs it.

His proposal also makes it possible that industrial undertakings can be established directly on the river banks and not far away from them on the hills where scarcity of water is greatly felt.

Using Moravian waters for productive purposes will make the economical situation of our inhabitants better. Industry and agriculture will rise up to such an extent that we can easily find the necessary capital for making a huge project—canal between the Morava and Odra rivers and thus connecting the Red sea with the Baltic sea on to our land. By this solution of simple navigation on the Morava for small boats up to 1,000 tons we will come also nearer the project of constructing a canal between the Elbe and Morava and thus connecting the Danube and Odra with the North Sea. Thus the money which should be invested for all those projects in our country will bring full benefit to the towns of the north-east and full benefit to all our industry, especially mining in Ostrava.

## **THE PROPOSALS**

What should we, Moravians, do to-day to come nearer our task ?

Firstly, reorganise the department for making projects for river arrangements which was previously in Prerov.

Let us equip this department with such projects and such people that will at least plan during the winter for making necessary waterway arrangements in our province.

Let us assign the whole region of Moravia under the same institution, under which are regulating all the Czech rivers, i.e., the Ministry of Public Works and the Waterway Fund.

Let us make an addition in the law of the Waterway Fund which is now under consideration and make provisions for the money regulating Moravian rivers during the first decade by the sum of 1 million crowns.

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VIII

## THE PIONEER



*In the third class waiting room of a railway station fifty years ago slept a sixteen year-old-boy. He was sleeping with one hand holding his wretched luggage and the other in the pocket in which there was a notebook full of scribblings in pencil. The heavy footsteps of a railway porter, who came to put coal into the fireplace, woke up the small boy who carefully felt his pocket to make sure that the notebook was there. It contained what may be called his treasure: the fruit of fourteen days' hard work, fourteen days' expedition to unknown places—from Zlin to Prague—to secure business. This little notebook contained orders. Orders that meant work, and work meant bread, coal, clothes and many other necessities of life for his family and also for his neighbours who worked with him.*

*It is hard to say in which expedition Thomas Bata showed most courage and underwent the most hardships. Was it the first one when as a 16 year-old-boy, poor as a church mouse, without any knowledge of the world, people or business he undertook, or the last one which was undertaken by plane to India when he was fifty-six and as rich as a king? The same courage and strength which inflamed the blood and brain of a boy, sent him as a man to America and all parts of the world in search of new scope and new tasks and woke him up thousands of nights on thousands of journeys in all possible transport vehicles throughout his life. It was the same power which put his three engined plane in the air in the middle of the winter of 1931 for his tour to India; this all-conquering power prompted him to undertake his last tragic flight for the sake of work in the dark morning of 12 July, 1932.*

*It was a passion for movement, for penetrating into unknown ways, for searching and finding out new possibilities for life and work. Those who do not know Bata's way of life, while looking at the charmed way of his continuous successes, account for it as merely a chain of happy circumstances and chances which he met with. In reality Bata was an opportunist, always in search of new fields to conquer. When an opportunity offered itself, however difficult, Bata grasped the opening and fathomed and solved the problem. It was not always a bed of roses. Absolutely unknowingly he finds for himself the most difficult problems, which nobody wanted to solve, or found out those which were passing unheeded by millions of people for many generations. "Nothing I gained easily, everything cost me most hard work. Do not try to find easy ways. So many people try to find those ways but they lead nowhere," he said. Of*

such stuff were the old Vikings and inventors of continents, the American colonists, penetrating through primeval forests, on their way for better existence.

Thomas Bata travelled widely. With the exception of Australia, he visited all the continents, and believed in the utility of travelling not only as a necessity in business, but also as an excellent means of education and knowing new people. From each of his travels, although all were heavy with work, he came back an entirely different man, refreshed in spirit and body, and full of new ideas and plans for new undertakings. Each tour meant a new offensive, every one brought a newer and brighter outlook on life.

As a cosmopolitan, whose brain was continuously encircling the world and who knew the major part of the globe, he always remained faithful to that futile part of the mountainous district, unknown to the world, and deposited there all the treasures of experience and knowledge for his work until the world recognized that place as a leading shoe producing centre.

And as courageously he finds new ways of life, with the same courage he tried to be active in the spiritual life—and here even more intensively. "We are pioneers. Cowards didn't start with us and weaklings were lost on the way. Forward!" he said to his young men. His obstinate spiritual struggles with himself alone, in which he was himself a strict judge and in which he was a persistent warrior, reminds one of a picture of the Biblical dream of Jacob fighting with the angel and calling: "I do not let you go unless you bless me."

Strong personal discipline, which he maintained by his iron will, of this passionate and restless man was a reward for all the life of those pioneering struggles, which had their charm for himself and also for those who went with him and understood him.

## LIFE ON THE BOAT

*From Thomas Bata's first tour to India in 1925.*

It is really nice to be a human being. A few hundred people are on the boat—men, women, children. When the weather is nice, all faces are smiling at you ; an air of complacency prevails on board. In everyone can be noticed the effort to be most pleasant and sociable. Many by long practice

in this kind of life have almost reached perfection and there are always groups of people around them, people who like their company. There is not the slightest sign of bad feeling.

If anybody by chance jolts you, he begs your pardon in very polite words just as if he had offended you greatly, but still social courtesy and manners do not restrict free movements of others, do not lead people to quietness. On the contrary, happy laughs and giggles are heard every now and then from every corner. The happiest are the children. They run to every corner of the ship, having free access everywhere like the captain. Everybody tries to get their presence, loves their company and makes room for their games and makes them the centre of all enjoyment.

The behaviour of men towards women, single or married, is based upon absolute equality.

While in the Indian Ocean, the sailors made a swimming pool on the deck. The pool was not big, and when the day was hot you could see a mixed party of about twenty in it, but neither by smile nor amorous jestures or looks these young people offended each other.

This discipline and restraint on the part of men are very wholesome for women. It gives them free movement and possibility to enjoy all the amenities of life which previously were reserved only for men. What a vast difference between these free women and the women of the East, who are denied social life and are always within the precincts of four walls!

When man gets those fruits of good social education, then only he understands that social manners and etiquette are not meant only to embarrass or restrict his movement, but to help him enjoy life and move decently even among absolutely unknown people.

My 14 days' stay on board the ship in good society showed me how nice it is to be a human being.

## **THE SUEZ CANAL**

*From the year 1925.*

A great thing, and yet so simple ! It was necessary to excavate and re-excavate it again and again. The absolute level, bordered on all sides by seas, shows itself, how and

where it was necessary to excavate. The small flour-mill canals in the mountains of our Republic offer more scope for thinking than this world's great work. But, man still cannot check his emotion, while he sails for the first time through the Suez Canal; emotion, of course, more from its importance than from the ingenuousness of it.

The breadth of the Canal is about twice as our river Morava. The sailing takes 18 hours. All around the canal is visible only deserts except in some places on the west bank where there are some small green plants which could grow here because of the other canal, which brings the river water as long as from Upper Egypt. On both sides of the canal can be seen railways and roads with passing caravans, because the whole business of this wide land is concentrated here. A look at the camels passing in caravans slowly is of utmost interest to the eye of a man from an inland country. The camel alone is interesting to him, and here in one caravan he can see many of them of different sorts, height and age.

Even more interesting are the people and their simple life. The worst off are the women. They have two big enemies : the sun which does not create, but destroy here all life—plants and human—and the second one is their outlook. You may think that people here marching in the hot desert where sand from below and the sun from above create a veritable furnace, is best armed against those enemies. Alas, not at all. You will find women dressed in heavy black dresses from head down to the last toe of their feet.

So we can see them suffering terribly from the heat sitting near the camels while the caravan takes rest. How better armed against this heat are the animals, with their fine furs, through which plays the breeze. In the same way, and even worse, they educate their children.

In somebody else's house it is easy to find more mistakes within five minutes than in one's own in a whole year. The same is about gaining knowledge and experience about

other nations. It is only needed that while looking at other's mistakes, we should pause from time to time for considering our own foolishnesses.

We, men, travel all over the globe to learn the best system and ideas of how to produce the best shoes and machinery. Every now and then we improve our productional principles, but for the betterment of education of our new generation and better management of houses for our wives nobody wants to take care. These things we leave to our grandmothers. Just recently our newspapers were crying that some American woman studying our situation, showed in cinema the picture of a mother somewhere from Uherske Hradiste with her children, and Americans had the feeling that Uherske Hradiste was somewhere near the Suez Canal.

And we, fathers, are not much better than this mother from Hradiste. If some American will come to study our schooling and will not let himself be stunned by the impressive facade of our schools, but will go inside to study things for himself, study the schools and their educational armaments, our misery also will be seen on the screen. But we will find an explanation somehow, we will say—we, fathers—that it is not our fault, that the state is responsible for it. According to the resolution of the last meeting of the mayors of the Moravian owns, the state should take from the towns and villages the management of schools and take upon itself even such minor things as cleaning, heating, white-washing, etc. They say the villages have no money for such things. If any mayor would look into the town's or village's cash book to ascertain how much the men from his village or town spend for drinking during the year he would find that it is at least five times more than they spend for their schools.

Upon schools most of us look as upon producers of certificates, which enable people to get states' job, or merely as upon troubles which, like all troubles, come from the high state's circles.



We, in Zlin, do not need for our children any certificate. We need that our children should learn to look straight and sharply at life, that they should learn good and quick thinking and quick earning, to take a step forward just as Englishmen or Americans do, and so that they may do it better than we did, that they should have courage to search for their bread further than in the state's safe. They should never make merry in taverns behind glasses of alcohol; they should have heart, they should pay the teachers of their children well and never think that the responsibility of the education of their children rests with the state.

## THE DUTCH FARMER

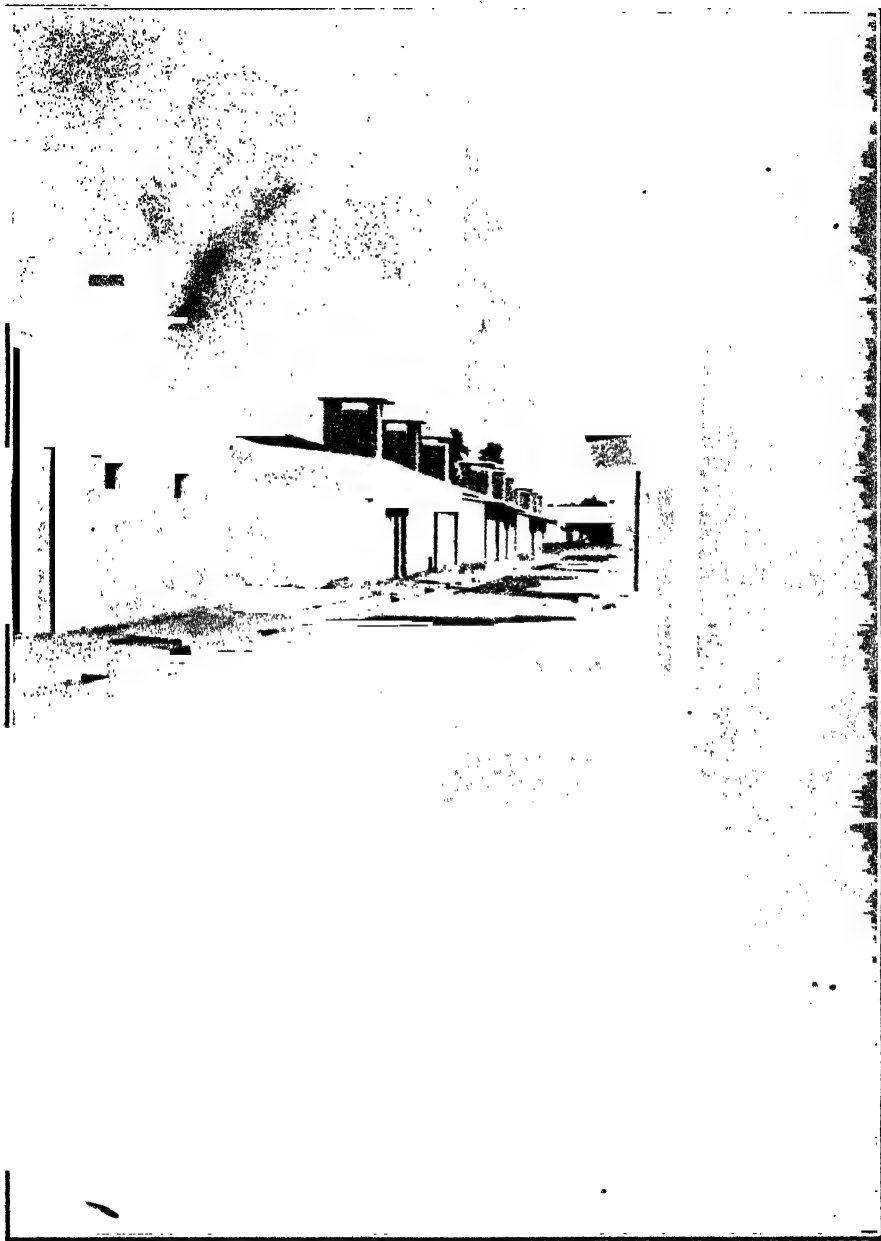
*From the Dutch Land.*

I could not hold a conference with my Dutch business friends whom I called at Amsterdam, because they did not want to deal on Sunday. But I succeeded in taking them out for a week-end into the countryside, to farmers' houses.

In each of my trips to Dutchland I noticed perfectly kept fields nice cattle, and I wished to see and know more of the really high class way of their farming. I visited with my friends a place near Amsterdam. We entered the courtyard of not a big farm. There we met a farmer, in rough wooden boots, carrying on specially nicely constructed scales two tubs of water. When he learnt our intention he put the tubs on the ground and took us into his house. Near the house he took off his rough wooden shoes there were four pairs, all nicely cleaned and polished. On his feet remained only the woollen socks. He introduced to us his wife, better to say the lady of the house. In this nicely dressed lady was not visible any trace of heavy manual labour, which wives of our farmers usually have. There are many photographs and pictures on the walls, mostly of their predecessors. With some pride he pointed out that his people lived in this house continuously for more than 300 years and promised also to show us outside the



Thomas Bata, jr. the only son of the late Thomas Bata. He is now the Manager, Bata factory at Canada. He is an active member of the Canadian legion of Frontiersmen, in whose uniform he is seen in this picture.



The 6th street of the Batanagar colony for bachelor employees.

remains of Nâpoleonic wars. The quarter consisted of a few houses arranged really luxuriously in comparison to our standard of living, especially so far as comfort and cleanliness were concerned. Near the living house there was a big hall on one side of which there was a carpet all round. I asked what purpose this hall served. "That is the stable for cows," said my Dutch friend, quietly being afraid not to prove his ignorance before the farmer. This big, airy, well-lighted room—of course, a wooden house—had nothing in particular that might suggest it was a stable. I was not surprised that there was no cattle, because it was known to me that in Holland the cattle leave the stables by the middle of April and come back in the end of October or November ; but there were not visible at the first look even the troughs. They are put directly on the ground, so that it is not difficult to pump water or put fodder into them. The cows are not kept tied in the stable. By the carpet they are separated only by wooden balusters. The cattle stand or rest on a raised place so that their excreta falls down to a depth where cattle cannot come into touch with it and is easily removed by the openings in the side walls. On the courtyard the farmer showed us some traces from Napoleon's war. There were remains of a big cannon ball—about two-thirds of it—stuck into the wall of the house and carefully kept against falling down and smeared with lard to prevent rust.

On the yard we met his two sons. The third one was serving the state as a soldier. The eldest boy, about 25, was a pleasant faced youngman dressed in modern dress. He was out for a walk in the village, wherefrom his father called him, probably because he himself did not want to disturb the Sunday atmosphere of the village by his working clothes and shoes. On the meadows nearby the village, I counted twelve nice cows and three horses. We carefully walked round the lands and fields, which belonged to the farm. As the youngman did not know the total measurement of their farm we measured the fields by our steps. We counted three hectares. But later the old farmer told us there were six hectares. An intelligent and honest man, it was not possible to disbelieve him,

although his way of measurement differed much from ours. All the lands and fields were kept in order, which is so rare in our countries. Here is shown that man imposed his will upon nature and on his fields are growing only what he wanted to grow. The whole farm does not belong to the farmer. He has rented some portions from some Jewish concern. From other farms his portion is separated only by a narrow trench filled up with water. The cows are milked directly on the meadow. One cow gives daily 3-4 gallons of milk in average and is milked twice a day.

On the way back we were thinking wherefrom comes this opulence of a man who gives rent for those 6 hectares of land. The life's measure of his family and his ambitions, best expressed in the family's pride, and self-consciousness can be compared only with our landlords to whom belong hundred times more lands than this Dutch farmer.

While thinking this the farmers of the Balkan mountains in Southern Europe came to my mind. On my trips in the Balkan mountains I often used to come out of the carriage and enter some houses for warming up. Their living places were so much like our stables so far as cleanliness was concerned ! While there is a big frost, people live in one room with the cattle. In most cases I found the old farmer, better to say the peasant, lying on a bed made of rough pieces of wood near the fire and his wife engaged in house-work and children, bare-footed, in ragged clothes, shivering from cold, feeding the cattle. Such a mountain farmer has his own lands. He could easily cut down from his forest a few logs of wood and put enclosures around his fields and also erect a partition in his house, thus freeing his children from the company of cattle. The standpoint of men towards women and children only stands in the way of doing this little thing. I asked once my carriage driver why he was not married. He replied that he had no land and thus was in no need of having women or children. "In our land," he said, "a man takes many wives to have several children for feeding his cattle."

What a difference in outlook about wife and children is there between those two farmers, and equal is the difference in the measure of their prosperity. Of all that I saw in the Dutch farms the most interesting to me was the scales on his massive shoulders and wooden shoes on his feet, whilst his mature sons were walking clad in modern dress through the village and his wife taking rest in the house.

If we on our lands, which belong to our undertaking, would do farming as economically and wisely as those Dutch farmers, we could have 180 cows which might give us 2,000 litres of milk daily and thus we might give everyone of our employees as much as one would wish to purchase for the cheapest price.

## AMERICA—EUROPE

*From the year 1926.*

During the last 6 years after my last visit to America the American shoe industry has made great progress.

Many undertakings made vertical concentrations, thus reducing their cost of production, although the wages are higher.

They are able to withstand competition of countries all over the world. If so far this ability was not expressed in the statistics of export trade, it is only because they cannot meet even the quickly increasing home consumption.

Due to technical efficiency and productional and distributional morality, the well-being among the widest masses of American people has been increased.

It is a pleasure and also pain for the heart of an European while he looks upon those marvellous asphalt roads, traversed by modern cars, which are used even by the poorest citizens, and their high standard of living and earning. The motor car especially increased the working capacity and, thus, also the prosperity of the American people.

When shall we, Europeans, step out of the mud and dirt of our muddy roads ?

When shall the time come of having passed our crisis ?

We have no right to demand from America any financial sacrifices, even in the form of discharge of our debts.

The American people refuse useless and harmful enjoyments (alcohol) and, therefore, have enough for enjoyments which are beneficial to life. We have no right to demand to enjoy those amenities so long as we spend milliards yearly on alcohol.

But all real friends of European people have to demand moral support for their nations. At the end, even the powerful and rich American nation does not know if and when her impoverished European friends will need that help and support.

The moral support is needed for us especially in economical co-operation ; we need many American products, but to pay for them and at the same time to pay the instalments of our debts it must be made possible to pay by the work of our hands, with our products. Gold we have none.

With every Governor of the National Bank every financial minister in Europe is shaking hands, if he should give his sanction on a dollar for the purchase of tractors, or calculating machines, being afraid of new inflation. All reasonable people in America wish for economical co-operation with Europe, because they know that it is beneficial to both.

But in practice this economical co-operation is made too one-sided. The American producer knows how to gain in Europe even the monopoly for the supply of so many articles as sewing machines, calculating machines, cars, etc.

Alas, with equal energy the American producers step out to prevent service from European sides to American people.

If any European producer succeeds in equalizing the production of his American competitor, he (American) rushes quickly to Washington and gets an increase of custom tariff and if the European producer surmounts even this obstacle, he will increase the tariff even more. This I say from personal experience.

I came with a number of my fellow-workers to purchase here new machinery and materials so that we might increase our production and thus also wages. Of course, I wanted to purchase only so much for which we would be able to pay or with our products—shoes. But it was said to us by our American competitors that we should not do it. One of them especially made a clear expression. Once at some dinner one of his customers who purchased shoes from him said, pointing at me, "He is the man who can teach you how to make cheap and good shoes." The shoe-producer, son of a high official from Washington, replied in a peculiar tone. "He ? Bah, we will put a custom duty on his shoes, as recently we did on slippers, and he will be finished." And still, particularly this undertaker can learn something even from us, Europeans, and thus increase his earnings and the wages of his people, while reducing the price of his products, same as we learn always from our better colleagues all over the world.

But learning and introducing new ideas is a difficult job. Much easier it is to go to the Minister of Trade and introduce a higher custom duty just as all incapable producers in Europe do. Those are the producers who think that the nation has a duty to take care of their efforts, and duty to take care of the right management of their undertakings. The moral powers in Europe are not sufficient for those idle elements which demand custom protection, just as they are not sufficient to remove the mud and dirt from our roads and drunkards from the taverns.

But the moral power of America is sufficient only to that extent if those great men take a little care, those men who raised the production and business on service to the public, on service to the nation and thus service to all humanity, to show all the world new ways of living a better life.

To produce all the different kinds of new machines is not possible in Europe, because there are not sufficient markets for the machines which make mental work easier, e.g., counting, calculating, etc. In America these big markets exist and there



are also conditions necessary to produce these necessities of new time and new man for all the world. But how other nations should buy them, if America is not able to accept their products by way of payment ?

## THE FLIGHT TO INDIA IN 1931

*On the 10th December, 1931, at 8-05 a.m. started from Batas aerodrome at Otrokovice near Zlin the three-engined plane Fokker OK-ATC for the historic flight to India, the flying distance of which was calculated to be 32,500 kilometres.*

*This great flight was a business tour which was planned and directed by Thomas Bata. This tour, first of its kind which was undertaken with the intention of establishing a close business connection between the small country in the heart of Europe and the great Indian peninsula, discovered the easiest and the quickest way of co-operation between the East and the West and paved the way for those who later continued on his way. The expedition visited all the countries on the way and from India continued to Singapore and further to Batavia. In the plane, which was directed by an English pilot, Captain Stack, were also the Czechoslovak pilot Broucek and radio operator Mares and besides Thomas Bata, three managers of the export department.*

*Thomas Bata came back from his tour on the 14th February, 1932, by another plane, because his Fokker was damaged on the muddy aerodrome at Constantinople after flying over the most difficult part of the trip—Taurus mountains in Turkey—and it came back to Zlin later. "It will not be a pleasant tour, but I must fly. In the world there is an exceptionally peculiar economic situation—it is necessary to solve it in an exceptional way. It is necessary to find the way and to set an example," said Thomas Bata before the flight.*

## THE FIRST DAYS OF FLIGHT

We won through the first day, although the radio continually broadcast reports about bad weather. Fog in the Alps made landing in Celovec and all Alpine aerodromes impossible. Captain Stack started circling over Vienna, wanting to land there. From this our pilot Broucek saved us who knew the terrain.

The flight across the Alpine mountains was splendid. There was no sign of fog, only the very high peaks of the mountains made us afraid because our Fokker (plane) was more than overloaded.

We were thinking of lightening the plane by throwing out the sausages, of which we had a good stock. But because they were especially good, we did not like to throw them away and saved them for our stomach.

We decided to land at Venice which we reached at 12-30 a.m., four and a half hours after our start from Batov.

After a short rest and refuelling we continued the flight to Rome, although the radio-reports about weather were not favourable to us. It was late afternoon and, therefore, all the way we kept maps and watches in our hands and calculated as to how many inches the sun was yet over the horizon. About 8 miles from Rome we received a good kick. Within 10 minutes we plunged into absolute darkness, met a heavy storm and strong winds from the opposite direction. All the street lamps in Rome were burning when we landed on the aerodrome.

After settling all passport matters we started next day from Rome at 11 a.m. Our radio-telegraphist, Mares, got details about the weather, which again were not favourable. Sicily and north Africa reported very bad storms accompanied with showers, moreover, landing in Catania was prohibited, the news of which we got by radio after our start and when we were over Naples, just in the neighbourhood of Vesuvius. But bad kicks came in increased velocity. All that we had in the shelves above us fell on our heads, and the chairs slipped from beneath us. The atmospheric conditions of Vesuvius gave rise to these jolts. By an energetic move of the wheel Captain Stack put an end to all this and we saw below the blue of the Mediterranean Sea.

What were we to do now? To continue flying meant meeting bad weather, while landing in Catania was prohibited. During the whole of our trip we had not seen any single regular or at least provisional aerodrome. All were on the other

side of the mountains. Because the sun was shining brightly we had a feeling to ignore all reports about bad weather just as we did the previous day on the way from Venice to Rome. We did not know why landing in Catania was prohibited, although Mares tried to get radio-connection with the ground station.

We entered heavy columns of clouds and in a moment knocked against their impenetrable walls. The heavy tropical rain immediately poured in through our windows and it seemed that we were helpless. Philosophysing was no good, we must turn back.

I wanted to give orders to fly above the clouds, but another radio report about the impossibility of landing in Catania or any other landing ground in Sicily, because they were water-logged by 14 days' downpour, prevented me.

There was only one way—down !

We sighted the first provisional ground and swooped down. The landing ground in Nicotera might boast of four planes which landed before us, but all were crushed. Thus you may imagine, how proud the inhabitants became of their ground and also of us, when such a big plane landed so nicely without any crash.

In Nicotera we encountered another enemy flying—sand. The wheels of our plane were half plunged in sand, so I was rightly afraid that we would not take off again. Therefore, we made the plane light by getting down and departed with our luggages to Palermo by train in the hope that the plane would meet us there next day and we might continue the flight to Tunis.

In the meantime the weather worsened and became fully bad. Even navigation was stopped. At midnight a heavy storm was raging which shook us even in our beds. We all were gravely concerned about the plane. Even on Saturday and Sunday it was not possible to get connection with Nicotera because telephone and telegraph lines were disconnected. On Monday we received the news that the Fokker was all right, but there was the problem of how to take it off from the sand.



Another picture of the Batanagar factory courtyard.



One of the departments in the March Past of the Batanagar employees on the Annual Sports Day.



The Western side of Batanagar.

On Monday morning we went to the aerodrome to get advice and meteorological reports. We found that we stood in the forefront of aviators from all Italy. The pilots and other people showered us with radio reports they got about our Friday's flight.

But most interesting was the reply of the aerodrome's director to our query as to how the plane would come out from the soft land. "What ! your plane is from 9 o'clock in the air and is heading for Palermo." The telegraphist also reported that the plane was about 12 miles from Palermo.

As the aerodrome in Palermo was also soaked with rain, we asked for quick despatch of instructions that they should fly straight to Tunis ; we could get there at best within the next two days.

There was no other alternative open to us than to accept this forced vacation. I fondly believe that God fulfilled the wishes of my wife who so much desired that I should take leave.

I hope we should be at Tunis on Wednesday morning and then the trip would continue without difficulties. What is waiting before us, I do not know. I know only that we were the first to undertake such a big business tour by plane—first who wanted to win over Time. We feel obliged to offer our thanks to many citizens here for their help which they willingly and gladly rendered us. Firstly, we must thank the citizens of Nicotera and the Italian Minister of Aviation for their complacence and valuable radio telegraphic service all through our trip over Italy.

## **FLYING AND HUMAN SOLIDARITY**

Flying is the youngest invention of human society and is the most successful child of human brain. Its greatest gift to man is the knowledge of human solidarity. It is this quality, to which people give credit for their predominance over the world, over other creatures. It is a quality which makes people invincible.

Aviation brings home to man the necessity of serving others. It teaches him that his life is lying in the hands of other people. It cures man of his hate towards other nations. A few hours of flying in unfavourable weather and he involuntarily finds himself in the middle of a nation and depends on hospitality from it.

From Tobruk we started at 6-30 a.m. At 8 a.m. we were just on the border between Kyreneirka and Egypt, bidding goodbye to Libya and Italy. We remember all those big and small services they rendered us here. At Alexandria we asked our ambassador in Rome to thank the Minister for Aviation and colonies on our behalf.

This is easy and cheap. The more difficult is to find out the opportunity to return all those services.

We must get to the wisdom of the mother whose son is living in a foreign land. She tries to serve every wayfarer in the hope that it will be returned somehow to her son.

Surely their services come from those generous sentiments. We were helped by people who knew nothing about us, who knew nothing even about the existence of the Czechoslovak Republic.

After the forced landing in Nicotera, we were escorted to the village by a small poor boy who showed us dry places on the muddy road. We could not speak to each other, I not knowing Italian. While parting I wanted to give him a lira. The boy gladly stretched out his hand for it. His eyes were glistening. Surely in his mind there was already an idea of how he would invest it. But at the same time an older boy appeared and cast a look on my boy. My boy withdrew his hand and his eyes showed an expression of fear. He would rather cut off his hand than accept my lira. With such refused money for service rendered to me I have my pockets full and they weigh heavy on my mind.

People here think much of service and the reward for it. It is seen from the following : As desired, this boy escorted me to the telegraphic office situated high in the village. It

took us an hour to climb those 600 metres on the difficult road. In the village I lost the boy in crowds unknowingly. I left the telegraph office by car. The boy then came to the station and reminded me that he did not receive his remuneration. The manner in which he made the demand was very right and surely he was to get advice from some older person in doing that.

The source of those two cases was probably this : At the first instance, the boy showed me the way from the aerodrome to the lower village out of his own will. He was not ordered. The service did not cost him any time or pain and, therefore, he refused payment for it. In the second instance, he went to the upper village only for my sake, was ordered to do it and, therefore, he should get some reward. I liked this boy and should be pleased, if he once accepts a place in my school for young men.

Entirely different was the Italy of old. All, old or young stretched out hands for "bakshish." Now it is just the opposite.

## **CHRISTMAS OVER THE DESERT**

The desert swallows time. The new engine comes a day later. It was installed in the right time. In the evening we started it and even at 11 p.m. we were not able to find out all the mistakes we had made in fixing it up. The next day at 1 p.m. we finished it and the trial flight ended at 4 p.m.

Now we hoped to start the following day, 25th December, before 7 a.m. Alas, the moon did not appear. The moonlight here has almost the same brilliance as daylight.

The Christmas Eve of soldiers, amongst whom we were now, was a simple affair. I lived it for the first time in my life. We succeeded in our efforts to feel happy. In the evening we decided to start after three o'clock in the morning for Benghazi, which is 525 km. from Syrte. Captain Stack and Meisel would wake up at three and say the last word. They agreed to start and wake up all of us.

We started at 4-15 in the morning. My first night flight. Almost all the officers came to help us start.



Goodbye Syrte ! I will never forget your magnificent sun, air and people !

We had the wind against us and clouds on the east, and the Captain was apparently becoming anxious about it.

The moon was nearly as bright as the sun, but was screened by the clouds. The night was dark, and only the flames from the engine exhausts and the swirling sea were our guides. The new engine on the left side of the plane had a fiery exhaust too, and confirmed that it was working well. The sight must have been awe-inspiring to people below.

We were in rain clouds. And it was not yet 5 o'clock. What is there before us ? The radio telegraphist, Mares, tried to get in touch with some station.

I looked at the engine to the left of me. Its regular knockings had the same value for us as the beats of our hearts. I felt the friendship between us, me and this engine, growing. It is the same kind of friendship that grows between a man and his horse. When the horse saved many times the life of the man and the man of the horse, they have a common feeling, a feeling either to win together or together perish.

It is 6 a.m. Look ! There, on the horizon, is a strip of light. It reaches my window. Is it daybreak ? Yes, it is. Thanks. Light comes and also reveals to us the good news that there, far to the east, where we are heading, are not dangerous clouds or rains, which make landing impossible. A few minutes later there was full daylight.

Meisel made a banquet. He emptied a thermoflask of tea, gave us eggs and some Arabian bread. Stack comes with a smile into our cabin and shakes my hands. We are all smiling. It is because we all love this life so much.

## THE FUTURE OF DESERTS

How different the earth looks in reality than on maps ! The map points out many rivers and creeks. By river we imagine a stream of water moving towards the sea. Truly speaking, over a stretch of 3,000 kilometres in North Africa I did not find a drop of water in the rivers, except in the Nile in Egypt.

I understand now, why here it is a greater offence not to drink empty a glass of water than not to empty your dish. Here water is regarded as valuable as life, and every vegetation seems to realize the importance and usefulness of water. They find out the deepest beds of rivers. As if they think : Better to perish and be swept away by floods than die from lack of water.

People have done very little so far for their life ! We do not know even how to prevent the water from turning towards the seas unless it changes the course itself. And how much useless water is there in the sea ! We still do not know how to make good use of those gigantic water reservoirs, to irrigate the deserts from their inexhaustible sources. To make the desert useful and yield crops, water must not flow from the mountain down to the sea, but from the sea to the desert. This great work from technical side cannot be accomplished by slaves nor by their horses. This great work can be achieved by those natural powers, which dazed us about 100 years ago : the invention of the steam-engine by James Watt.

The chemical side of this problem can be solved when mankind will give birth to a chemist like Watt. On chemists depends the task of separating those minerals in sea water, which are injurious to life, from the nourishing fluid and of employing both to vegetable and biological life.

Thus will rise up magnificent life in the deserts. That life itself can create an atmosphere in which will flourish the natural circulation of water. Then on the earth will grow more food than is necessary for population, ten times more than today and then the centre of attraction will be turned to those places, to the Mediterranean and to this side of Asia.

## **THE WAY FROM EGYPT TO PALESTINE**

Magnificent is the land near Nile. It is a green paradise, so welcome to our eyes after a flight of 3,000 kilometres over sand.

This paradise soon ends and brings us back to the realization of a desert. Our enthusiasm is dimmed due to bumping of the plane made by a strong wind. At what height should we fly to have a quiet journey ? Mares tried to get radio

connection, but Cairo is silent. At the end a long report was received. In Egypt there is rough wind up to 8,000 feet ; in Palestine 3,000 and a heavy sand-storm. All right. We shall go up. And there, from the south, comes the sand-storm.

I never saw a sand-storm. I am a little frightened, unacquainted with it as I am. Now we must quickly go up, although we are already at 2,000 metres. Capt. Stack comes to the cabin for his wintercoat. We must get at least up to 3,000 metres ; we all take wintercoats ; it is cold. The storm quickly comes and Stack does not rise up much. Now I understand. He swerves to the north and wants to avoid the storm. Probably he is afraid of losing the direction, as due to sand he would not see the earth. I wished to see the same thing and gain some experience from the sand-storm. Probably Capt. Stack has that experience and does not want to repeat it. We fly now over the sea ; the storm is more and more on the south behind us. Surely it was not a big storm, otherwise we would not have left it so easily.

But now we are behind our scheduled time. We started at 13-15 hours, one hour later than we should have done and, moreover, we have got the wind against us. We will land near Jerusalem, in Ramleh, probably in the evening.

Stack gives orders to Mares to ask for the time of sunset at Ramleh ; now the sun is near the horizon. If it sets down immediately it will be dark. But we are not far from the aerodrome. Stack gives more gas to the engine left of me. This I must stop. It affects my friendship with the left engine after the flight last night.

## NIGHT IN BUSHIRE

The place has 30,000 inhabitants, but not one hotel. Until recently the pilots and passengers of British air liners prepared their tea themselves at the aerodrome. Only the other day Mr. Kazerooni made a small hotel of an old farm near the aerodrome. There are three or four beds, and the arrangement is very simple.

We were satisfied here with the wonderful sea-breeze and perfect cleanliness. Mr. Kazerooni, a good and honest man, an important businessman in South Persia, speaks English fluently and is really everywhere. He dined with us and gave us valuable information about business. We slept together in two rooms. This hotel he built up at his own expense, otherwise he has agencies all over Persia—exports and imports all kinds of goods to and from all countries of the world.

## WE FLEE TO THE STORM

We are flying two hours and have a good wind. By forenoon we will have covered 850 kilometres. Now we are over the town of Lingeh, where planes of the Imperial Airways land, but we did not see any aerodrome at all.

The wind is now quiet, the sea below us just like a mirror. From the plane are visible the magnificent mountains under the water. We approach near Arabia and soon we shall see her cape.

But just from that side is beginning to rise a heavy mass of clouds and our plane begins to bump up and down. What is it? We have still got a west wind, but clouds from the east are coming nearer and becoming threatening. Capt. Stack says that he will run towards north. It's a matter of regret as we will not see any little part of Arabia. Stack knows well how to run out. It is not difficult. If he flies the plane on the way of the wind, he will have the speed of the storm and moreover 150 km. more. And, as it seems to me, he has left the storm far behind.

We are flying high over the first heralds of that storm. The shadow of our plane illuminates the clouds below in a thousand colours. Round the shadow there is the coloured semi-circle—rainbow. Often I have flown above clouds, but I have never seen so beautiful a picture. The storm deceived us. It was spread all over the south-east, and the place where we fly and where we must make a landing was also affected. Stack turns straight against it. Let's see. He has won quite a number of such battles in the tropical air. Mares works on the

radio but nobody replies. The storm now is all over us, the plane bumps up and down and also on the sides. Behind us there is still a strip of light. There Stack will try to escape, if it worsens up. But we need not worry, we still have enough petrol to be hours in the air. The storm kicked the plane down, we are within a few hundred metres from the earth. Heavy rain splashes against the plane and near our windows lightning flashes. Now we are in the hands of God. We fly over absolute level. Is it Arabia ?

Again there is a sea below us. But what is there before us ? Light ? Stack pointed it out to us. He smiles. It is always he who wins. The storm is behind us. Only heavy clouds keep pace with us, but even them we leave behind. The plane is still bumping, so we go up. We know that up there, we will find favourable wind.

In Jask, as in all airports, many formalities had to be gone through. The police did not allow us to leave the plane without medical examination. Our entry to the town was prohibited by the surgeon, because we flew from a district where there was cholera. We must immediately leave the airport. And that is what we wanted. It is only 12 a.m. and to-day we want to make a record flight of 1250 kilometres. Even the restaurant we are not allowed to enter, so we prepared our own tea and the surgeon himself brought us water.

We are speaking about the past storm. Mares thinks that it was not possible to fly above it ; it was about 10,000 feet. And to such height our fully loaded plane cannot fly. He looked at the near Iranian mountains, where the storm was still visible. The track of winds is clearly seen, as a high massive pillar of sand.

But what is it ? Again it is our storm which reached us. The tea and potatoes from Bushire are rolled somewhere in the sand. Hurry up with the petrol ! We tie the wings of the plane to prevent it over-turning, if we do not succeed in running away from here. Hurry up ! End with the filling of tanks, we must start with half the quantity of petrol.

Again in the air. A few minutes after, the storm was not even visible. The plane is jumping. Why? Broucek gives me a chit of paper. It is not possible to climb higher, there is a contra-wind, Ah, that is not true. This business now we understand. The contra-wind is down here which is seen from the waves of the sea. Up above there is good wind as the presence of clouds testify.

This predominance of passengers in flying knowledge we must fully use now for strengthening the authority of passengers. We write it in big letters to the pilots. It has a good effect. The pilots capitulated. Stack indicates by waving his hand that we go up. If the good back wind will continue, we can fly to-day all over Persia and land down at Gwadar in Baluchistan. The question again is, when will the sun set? Mares tries to get the news by radio. We all control the watches. Every minute now is very valuable.

## TAURUS

On the way back from India it was not possible to think or write the details of our flight. In the plane we were all busy discussing business problems which now, on our tour back, have a concrete shape.

It so happened that I gave only simple, brief orders as regards the flight back. But in Syria, in Aleppo, only two days' flight from Zlin, I was pressed again to deal with our flying. The chief pilot, Captain Stack, has had thousands of explanations as to why we cannot start from Aleppo and fly straight over Turkey to Constantinople. I remember his many excuses about the danger of flying through Turkey in the winter, especially in the February rains. To support his statement about the absence of good landing grounds in Turkey about their service of radio, about bad weather, about the high mountains, he gets many witnesses at the Aleppo airport.

I agreed that it was necessary to count all those difficulties and to arm ourselves against them. But to leave this way I did not agree. The more obstacles there were, the more anxious I became to surmount them.

The aim of my trip by plane was to find the shortest way to India and to know all the impediments of that way.

Turkey lies on the shortest way. This fact our chief pilot failed to understand. I gave him to understand that we would fly through Turkey, either with or without him.

At this my declaration Captain Stack takes all his belongings out of the plane. We might continue our way even without him. Mares and also Broucek expressed willingness to fly over Turkey even without Captain Stack.

Captain Stack flew over Turkey four times. His pessimism was based on his wide experiences, the complacence of other pilots only on their bravery without experience. My attitude was beginning to look like obstinacy. Till now I always succeeded in getting members of our trip agree with me. According to Captain Stack we were before the most difficult part of our journey. In such cases unity was of utmost importance. And besides, I began to realise the position of Stack. He gave to this trip his name, his fame, his time, his efforts. His leaving us will have for him bad results, moral as well as financial, because he would not be able to get the premium estimated for the success of the whole trip.

I made all this clear in a letter to Captain Stack. I pointed out to him the losses he would incur if he stuck to his standpoint. On that Captain Stack came back. It was our as well as his victory. Just after one hour we are flying over the Alexandrette Bay. On the far horizon are visible the high Taurus mountains. This word I heard from aviators articulated with an expression which till now I could not account for.

Stack raised the plane to 3000 feet. Mares tried in vain to get connection with some of the Turkish stations. We are entirely amongst the mountains. On the right side, north-east, there are heavy clouds which cover the unpleasant mountains. They do not hurt us. Our way is north-east, and there is a clear horizon. Surely over the Taurus we will fly quietly. The plane quickly rose up, but, alas ! Quickly rose high also the wind, which became very unfavourable. The clouds from

the north-east pressed us always towards a southerly direction, out of our proposed track. If we would continue to turn away from it, we will come back to Aleppo. We must go straight into it. It would have been easy if we knew what was there before us, and how high were the clouds. But Mares with his radio is helpless, none of the Turkish stations replying. We must continue turning more and more back to get away from the clouds. Now we are at 4,300 metres. Over four hours we are in the air and still we cannot find any gorge through which we can fly forward.

According to our calculation we should have flown over the Taurus mountains within one hour of our start. We read the petrol consumption metres and find that we have fuel only for two hours more. Now ends with experiments ! We must start to think of ourselves. Thus ends our radio telegraphic conference between ourselves, which is known only to aviators. We need not exchange words and spend electricity for it. It comes straight through us. Captain Stack turns back. Where will we land ? In Adana ? It is not possible. We are 3 hour's flight away from Adana and, moreover, there is too small a landing ground for a plane like ours. This Stack said beforehand and it was confirmed by all the pilots in Aleppo. Then where else ? May be somewhere on the beach. For this we have petrol. But Stack said that on the beach of South Turkey there is not a single place for landing, the stony mountains end straight in the sea.

In the meantime we fly to Adana. We have still some luck. The wind which was against us, now is in our favour, giving us 70 kilometres more speed per hour. This surely will help us to reach Adana. Now we are not worrying about the small landing ground. Better small than none.

We are in Adana. Many times we circle over the town, but we do not find any aerodrome at all. We frightened people and animals of the whole district by flying our big monster just over their heads. Luckily we set down on the meadow.



Now we are sitting in the mail train at the station in Adana. The report about weather was hopeless throughout the morning, but work will not wait. From the train is visible the great range of icy mountains. A terrific sight ! The sky is clear ; still it might be possible to fly over it. Let us try again. Off from the train and hurry to the plane. Again we are in the air. It is clear, clear as the water from the fountains. We are flying straight against the massive mountains. For a little while we saw the train, which started before us with my friends and luggages. The railway lines ran encircling the mountains, in canyons and tunnels. The train soon vanished from our sight.

Our Fokker heavily gets up, having bad fuel in her. In Adana we did not get the special aviator's petrol but only simple petrol used by cars. It is luck that I had run away from my companions in the train. With them it would have been even worse. We are at 12,000 feet and still before us there are some higher mountains. I look at the engine left of me which is giving now 1,700 revolutions, 100 more than for what it is constructed. And I promised it friendship and faith ! I have a feeling of faithlessness. But what to do ? If we reduce the revolutions, we cannot keep on the thin air present at this height.

Mares, who sees all the three engines at a time, pointed at the temperature measurer of my left engine, which was quickly going down to zero. The matter is very serious. The lubricating arrangement was damaged, oil became ice cold. Now there is no time to hesitate. It is necessary to stop the engine at once. We are just on the highest points of Taurus. Under us there are terrific glens, snow, ice and no vegetation at all.

Stack slowly stops the damaged engine. Will those two remaining keep us in the air ? Yes, they do.

All our eyes are looking intently at the right machine. It is a spare one, installed in North Africa. It was installed in

a great hurry on the desert in Syrt. It stopped very often. Now it must do the work even for my injured friend on the left side.

The Taurus mountains seem to have no ends. We are in the air already three hours and still down below we see only glens, rocks, and ice. Over the Alps we flew hardly one hour.

We must save the engine. Therefore, we fly near the earth. We keep on, where it is possible, near along the Baghdad railway to get space in case of forced landing. The only thought of us all is : how far is the next airport Konia ! Luckily for us, yesterday we sent there a message to mark the landing ground by flags. Probably this airport exists also only in the state's paper, as in Adana.

Thank God, Konia is before us. We recognised it from the great railway station. Rather we should have recognised it from the great airport, but we looked left and right, the airport is nowhere. It might be that we overlooked it due to the snow. The next landing ground is in Eskisehir, 300 miles further. Stack moves his head and flies ahead non-stop.

## FROM THOMAS BATA'S NOTEBOOK

*Besides remarks of common interest, Thomas Bata took notes in each of his searching tours which formed a basis for his next work. Here are a few of such remarks from his tour of the East.*

**TRIPOLIS :** A camel costs here 600 to 700 Italian liras ; It can be loaded with 400—600 kilos and can make a journey of 100 kilometres in three days. The rate for a camel and its driver is daily about 20 liras. The ox costs 60 to 100 liras and makes daily 20 kilometres with 100 kilos of loading.

The rate for an ox and a man is 6—10 liras. Necessary to consider that in this land, sparsely populated, there will be great transport distances. It is not possible with the present management for the shopmanager to get his goods by post or by car. It is necessary to transport the goods to the

nearest port and therefrom inside the country by camel. This is the only transport possible which may be taken into consideration, and all this the shopmanager must manage himself. The distance between ports are about 100 kilometres and very few shops will be from the port more than 100 kilometres.

**Palestine :** We landed at Ramleh. Immediately we left for Jerusalem. In the morning we visited the Ramleh colony Tel-Aviv, centre of Jewish culture, and Jaffa. I feel like an ox. All that I heard about this country was different from what I saw. However, I already became accustomed to it. Up till now, every country I visited looked entirely different from what I knew it to be. This tour would benefit me greatly if I will not forget this experience, if I can convince myself that I have no right to decide about things of which I do not know or ever seen.

**Baghdad :** The shoe-cleaner does his work as follows : Firstly he cleans the shoe completely by a rag. Then he washes it with soap, just as whitewashing. For colouring, he applies liquid polish, a little red and little yellow, according to the shade he wants to get on the ready show. Then he gives stiff polish from a box like ours and then by cotton cloth he cleans it again, and again applies the stiff polish.

For soap solution he uses ordinary soap ; the liquid polish is from the factory—Cobra Blyth & Platt Ltd., Watford. The polish from Columbia Polish Mfg., 81, Greenest N. Y. The box of liquid polish costs 7 annas, polish 8 annas in retail.

## ON HIS RETURN TO ZLIN

Friends, Surely I was not expecting and also did not deserve such a great welcome as you have accorded me. We made a long trip, which is equal to the way all over the world in our latitude.

But it is not our pride and merit. We have no right to be proud of this success. On the contrary, I feel it our duty to feel obliged to those great inventors and pioneers of aviation

who sacrificed even their lives to give us this new machine. To them belongs the credit that within a few weeks we made a trip for which previously was necessary some years.

This machine makes it possible for us to know many nations. I may with pleasure announce to you that they all need our work. They all want to co-operate with us for the betterment of our life, if we will help them to make better their life and if we will make our present work still better.

To our work and to aviation.....cheers !

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IX

## THE FELLOW-WORKER



All his life Thomas Bata sustained a bond of unity and fellowship with the working people; with the millions of those who daily stand behind the machine and toil in the factories, on the field—above and under the earth. Himself a member of a family of working men, he rose to the top by the strength of his own intelligence. But it was not sufficient for him that he solved the problem of raising the standard of the working man for his own benefit. His defiant intelligence was stimulated by the greatness of the task of raising the common people from whom he came. He wanted to achieve that, not in the future, but at once. In the conviction that bread is more powerful than implements and work more effective than speeches, he searched for the unity of powers in all his undertaking. He looked upon his undertaking as a social body and the only thing by which the working people can better their lot by common effort for better service to the human society. The manifestation of unity of work and the workman's sense of duty of mutual service, he saw in the celebration of the holiday of work on the 1st of May. In 1924 he invited, by a letter which we publish here, all his fellow-workers to his house and from that time he annually celebrated with them the holiday of work.

The tradition of this common celebration, as was developed, shows the deep educational sense of Bata's effort. In his announcements he presented to his fellow-workers the statistics of wages, prices of products and employees' earnings and savings and to the public, "the social balance-sheet of social activities" of his factory. The interest that gathered in the holiday of work in Zlin and the whole state was so great that in the celebrations of 1931, 80,000 people were present and later on in 1937 180,000 people. The huge working halls of Zlin factories that day were changed into festive dining-halls. In the midst of decorated machines were set nice white tables full of flowers behind which sat down people working in that workshop with their families.



*and friends. They were all guests of the factory and the host and hostess were the workshop manager and his wife. This day can be marked as the greatest holiday of that great working family and his manifestation of respect to work and to the unity of working people.*

*Thomas Bata's first invitation to the 1st of May celebrations in 1924 was addressed and sent to each one of his fellow-workers in Zlin.*

**1st May 1924.**

FRIENDS,

Our working family is already so great that we do not even know each other. Therefore, let us meet on the 1st May after our whole year's great work into a friendly meeting of enjoyment, which we all so richly deserve.

Please bring with you, your wife and your children. They all will be heartily welcomed at my house.

With friendly greetings,  
THOMAS BATA.

## **FELLOW-WORKERS**

*Speech from the 1st May, 1924.*

I welcome you all to my house. You all have come from far and near on my friendly invitation to celebrate together to-day's holiday of work, the holiday of working people.

We see each other every day. The vigorous and powerful voice of the factory siren calls us all daily inviting us to our hard work, hard struggle—to the struggle of people with material, with substance, to the struggle of people with people and to the struggles with bad elements which threaten our work and our homes.

In the factory, we all go daily to fight there for our livelihood. Where there is livelihood, there is life ; where there is life, there is fight.

In the factory, there is no place for friendly expressions. Love and Friendship are things of home life.

But still, our work—our supporter—needs that at least once a year we all should meet together, not for work, but purely from friendly motives, not for toiling and fight, but for pleasure and enjoyment ; not as workers, foremen, incharges, directors but as members of one family participating in common in one work ; United by the same task—a family which gets its life's sustenance from one common source.

And such a day should be to-day. Therefore, the factory siren remains silent and we all meet here under the roof of my house instead of in the workshop.

The signs and banners which you so proudly carried over your heads in the procession, represented your products. Your products, products of our industrious hands, are our flags, our signs. Centred round our products we create a glory, as the peasant created for centuries around his product—a piece of bread. The product of a peasant is the gift of God. Equally blessed must be our products to us and to others.

Our mountainous district, unblessed, barren, overpopulated, is best for the creation of misery. It has no natural riches as coal, petrol, ore, and the earth even is not favourable for cultivation. Old people say : "When God distributed stones to the world, his bag was torn while passing over our district." And even the stones are valueless and are of no use. They cannot be utilized for constructing roads, nor for architecture. And other people say : "In our district there is the end of a good bread and beginning of good water. And thus we import bread for our families and even stones for our roads from the more blessed districts."

The only thing we have got is our work; by it and through it we can expect a better future. But even for this work, for its continuity and preservation, we must daily wage heavy fights in our country and also outside it. And we shall only be able to keep it if we all will compete among ourselves to increase our output and improve our work.

We must protect our work against known and unknown enemies, in the same way as we see the peasant protecting his soil.

Good God has given to us healthy hands and healthy brains. We in Zlin understand the importance of work. The proof of it are those chimneys, surrounded by the healthy dwellings in which are living our healthy and happy families. The proof of it can very well be seen also in the results of the town election in which we elected not a political party or doctrine, but work. And that our work honestly serves all the inhabitants, which lies in proof of the good name of our products, which is evident in every part of the world.

We have reasons to feel happy and proud of the results of our work. And I feel glad to see this pleasure reflected in the faces of all of you present here.

## **FRIENDS**

*A cable from his first tour to India on the 1st May, 1925.*

I am sorry that at to-day's holiday of work I cannot celebrate together with you.

I wish you from this far off place a hearty enjoyment. Let this day inspire an atmosphere of sociability and mutual appurtenance. Let everyone understand that he forms a part of an army, not fighting, but working for the felicity of his own and others.

Like an army we are divided in our work in small and bigger groups with smaller or greater leaders. It is the duty of the leaders to love their subordinates, and subordinates to

respect their leaders. No leader ever had a bad time, if he had taken enough care of his subordinates, in the same way no subordinate had a good time if his leader was in bad times.

Mutual confidence is the best friend of your life and the greatest and most faithful helper in your common deal. The salvation lies only in you. Nobody will help you, if you will not help each other.

Yours,

Thomas Bata.

**1st MAY, 1926**

*With the passing of years Thomas Bata had seen more and more clearly the signs of an industrial organization from which he expected the solution of the question of existence of the people working in industry, and, what is more, the continuous improvement of the standard of living of the working people. In his fiftieth year he put upon himself a great task. It was his habit and conviction that only great work produces great results and a high average. He did not stop with the idea of putting a task into effect, but immediately laid the foundation for its realization. Therefore, his manifesto on 1st May, 1926, is actually a social programme, which year after year he fulfilled and perfected.*

Friends, Fellow-workers,

I thank you for your friendly greetings on the occasion of my fiftieth birthday. I thank my parents for my life, which I enjoy although I am fifty and I thank them more for the training they gave me in shoemaking and which they taught me to love.

I remember the injured heroes of our work and I am happy that to-day I may declare that this year's success of your work enables us to present one million crowns for the foundation of our hospital. We came to the opinion that it will be the duty of the management of this enterprise not only to set free this undertaking from dependence on capital but also to take care that all our fellow-workers should be free from economic dependence and economic servitude. The management of the undertaking should help them to gain

capital, to make capital their servant and their slave. It is the duty of the management of the undertaking to be helpful to all the employees in gaining capital, to educate the employees in dealing with money and to educate them in the art of preserving capital.

We can teach the youngest members of our working family this art most easily and, therefore, we shall present from this year to each child born to our employees one thousand crowns. Our undertaking itself will ten times multiply this sum by the child's twenty-fourth year if it will be able, as it is till now, to pay 10 per cent interest on it. Equally we can achieve this for our young men, whom we educate in such a way that before the obligations of a family will burden them they will have at least one hundred thousand crowns each, besides expert knowledge, good health and sound training. The results we have so far obtained prove that even a fourteen-year-old boy can gain in industry more than his life's needs.

To free the mature people from economic dependence we are trying by increasing output and thus also wages ; then share of employees on the results of their departments and reducing the costs of necessities of life. The statistics of the personal department show the results so far gained in our effort.

The savings of our employees invested in our enterprise, the amount of which has been doubled during the last year, already amounts to a sum of 26 million crowns. Our estimates for the next year show that even on this head we wish more speed.

But to-day is not the right time for any deep economical reflections. The growing life around us invites us all for enjoyment and pleasure. We have worked hard and worked honestly for 300 days. Let this day be our day of enjoyment, let all our faces shine to-day with the pleasures of life. Let this day serve for mutual introduction among our family members, let it stimulate the understanding that we belong to each other, that we all make one great working family.

Cheers to life, Cheers to our work !

*In the year 1927, in the midst of hard creative work according to the plans expressed in the 1st May, 1926, Thomas Bata does not speak. "The best speech is good work", he says and presents the statistics of wages, prices of shoes and savings of the employees. He kept silent until the year 1928, when at the 1st May celebration which was attended by 40.000 people. He says :*

*My fellow-workers, Our distinguished guests,*

*I welcome you all heartily to our celebration of the 1st of May. I thank you all for your expression of friendship in our common work. The significance of this day grows for us just in the same way as our working family is growing everyday.*

*In the old times, crafts and undertakings were too small. All the members of such undertakings used to live under one roof, sit round one table and eat from one common plate. There certainly did not exist any doubt whether it was necessary for them to be united. There was no doubt that the success of their enterprise was the success of each one of them.*

*Our present working family cannot go now under one roof. It is widespread all over the world. Thus, the 1st May means that we should meet all together to know each other and for the mutual introduction gain new power and confidence for work for the coming year. In your workshops have assembled your guests and your wives and your children. Introduce them to the ideas of your work so that they will also find their honour and glory only in the success of their and your work for the benefit of your family and for the benefit of all people.*

*Let yourself fully enjoy this 1st day of May.*

*And in conclusion I ask you to proclaim with me to our beloved President T. G. Masaryk and to our Prime Minister and to all our guests—three cheers !*

### **"I AM GUILTY!"**

*Up to the end of 1928 the factory shows continuous increase in production as well as sale. It is especially business abroad which expands in all the world's markets with the co-operation of some great businessmen with whom Thomas Bata was always in contact. But unexpectedly in the Spring of 1929 he abolished*

wages occupy the first place in the list of services we get. Wages in industry means the well-being of people, as harvest in agriculture.

Therefore, it is the duty of everyone of us to strive for continuous increment of wages.

I present to you to-day the statistics of wages which shows an increase of average wages this year in comparison with the last few years.

We have not reached the full estimates of the height of wages for lower employment. And less employment last year was due to speculation in the shoe trade. The reconstruction of sales organization which we made last year, removed speculation with our products and guaranteed us continuous increment of wages in proportion to our work.

If so far we have not succeeded in reaching the highest salary in the world, we think we have at least partly succeeded in our effort to make our working people economically independent, people who govern over capital.

The result of this our effort so far is that our books show no single instance of the indebtedness of the employee to the enterprise. On the contrary, the enterprise is in debt to the employees, as the figures published show, to the extent of 74 million crowns which the employees are keeping with us at 10 per cent interest.

By publishing the statistics of the result of our work and effort we would like to create a contest amongst other enterprisers for the increase of wages and reduction of prices of products. We would like to convince all undertakers that those factories which take care of their employees are, in competition, much stronger, because into such factories come people with minds of pioneers.

I hope that the time is not far away when the companies will publish, besides the figures of dividends for their shareholders, also the statistics to show how the wages of the employees increased and by how much the prices of products were reduced during the corresponding year.

The height of wages contributes only to half of common prosperity. The second half depends on the cheapness of industrial and agricultural products. High wages and cheap products we can reach only if the producers will do their work in the spirit of service to the public.

At the end I request you all to proclaim with me to our President Masaryk, to our Czechoslovak Republic and to our Work—three cheers.

## **1st MAY, 1931**

*These few brief sentences are the victorious conclusion of two years of hard work at a time when everyone heard the remark, "nothing can be done—only waiting for better times." 80,000 people listen out of which 23,000 are the employees of the enterprise in Zlin, which had doubled in the worst days of the world's crisis not only in the production of shoes, but also in the construction of new departments, machinery, engineering, buildings, etc. Those sections are building up not only new workshops, machines, shops and their furniture, but also building the evergrowing town. Thomas Bata feels that the fruit of his decision taken in the year 1929 is going to ripen.*

## **FRIENDS AND FELLOW-WORKERS**

*Speech from the 1st May, 1931.*

I welcome you at to-day's celebrations. We have every reason to celebrate it with joy and pleasure. Two years ago we went through a great crisis in respect of sales. At that time I said, on the 1st May that we were responsible for that. You believed, you understood and you won.

You proved that even the greatest crisis can be overcome by people of strong and united will.

We removed speculation from our work, we set ourselves free from the dependence on capital, we made capital the servant of work, the servant of our people.



There will be no crisis in our undertaking so long as we remain faithful to ourselves and to our work. Now it depends only upon us to fully utilize this our victory in perfect service to ourselves by the increase of wages, shortening of working time, and to our customers by betterment of our products.

Let us not be afraid of the future. Half the people in the world are walking barefooted and hardly 5 per cent of all the inhabitants are well shod.

Here we can see best how little we have done so far, and how great a task is waiting for all the shoemakers of this world.

### THOMAS BATA'S LAST HOLIDAY OF WORK

*This speech, delivered on the 1st of May, 1932, two and a half months after his return from India, comprises in a condensed form all the peace, self-consciousness and sense of certainty of a man in one of the worst periods of world economy. Neither he nor anyone that stood around him listening to his words could feel that the end of his life was drawing near. Such was the vigour and energy of this man of dynamic personality. And the speech he made was marked by almost a tragic greatness. Every word he uttered came true, which is best expressed in the continuation of work of the enterprise after his death. This man was living such a life that he could die any moment, having accomplished all tasks, obligations and duties which he put upon himself, and with the good knowledge that his deal was in safety.*

Friends, Fellow-Citizens,

We have reason to feel happy even to-day, on our holiday of work. It is because, even in these difficult times we have kept our economic independence intact, because we were led by the slogan, which is written on our factory wall, "Let's be creditors, not debtors."

We are not indebted to anybody except ourselves. We have paid all our taxes. We have the best machines and the best organizations for the production of shoes in this world.

We each have a free and healthy pair of hands, able to do that work which the present time demands from us all.

Millions of people are still barefooted in this world. It is to be regretted that we do not know how to create business with them and, alas, we do not know even their languages.

This work is waiting for us and our sons, but, first of all, this work is waiting for you youngmen. We believe that you will continue to increase our sales and build up our town, our district and state.

I ask you to proclaim with me three cheers to the leaders of our public life in our province and state, to the Provincial President, Mr. Cerny, to our Prime Minister, Mr. Udrzal and to the beloved President of our Republic, Mr. Thomas Garrigue Masaryk—Three cheers!

Fellow-Workers,

Many people think that hard work and struggle with hard problems could be done with a smile on the face. That is not true. With a smile on our lips we must meet our customers, to whom we are obliged to give a smile along with our products. The smile on our lips we must keep and preserve for our homes for our wives and our children. But let us not ask for this smile in the factory, in the workshop, at the time when it is necessary to fight hard with difficult working problems.

These days you can see amongst the leading men of our enterprise many despondent faces. Those faces bear the sign of a struggle which they are continually waging for finding out a new basis for all of you, for all of us.

I ask you not to be afraid of fight, not to shun it even if you are in danger of defeat.

Struggle is the father of all success. Without struggle there is no life, but especially, without struggle there is no victory. We are fighting for the victory of our work. Let us proclaim three cheers for it.

*When the banks were stabilised in Czechoslovakia, Thomas Bata warned the responsible personalities in a special private publication in which he pointed out the consequences which would inevitably follow such restoration of banks. Defending*

*the standpoint that one should bear the risk of one's actions, he protested that the state should save the unreliable or dishonest bankers or light-minded and speculating creditors. He had seen in it the menace to the working people, menace to producers, menace to the production capacity of the nation. When, despite his warning the restoration was made, he turned to his fellow-workers with the following manifesto:—*

## **THE FINANCIAL RESTORATION OF BANKS**

The newspapers announce that the financial stabilization of banks by the state is already settled. But the question of moral restoration of our banking is still left untouched, except for a few reflections of Dr. Hodac and Dr. Stransky.

The Government have decided only upon financial restoration.

The moral restoration was restricted only in that the leading personalities of banks must return their shares in profits from the last two years, *i.e.*, they should return those shares, special rewards which they received for gaining extraordinary profits. Nothing is mentioned, whether they would still retain their positions or whether they would be brought before the court.

Many of our fellow-workers will heave a deep sigh while reading this deplorable news. Deplorable for everyone who has some idea of economical questions of the state and of economical morality.

Most sincerely will sigh those men who made the biggest sacrifices during the "change of morality" in 1922, while Dr. Rasin was the Finance Minister.

At that time Dr. Rasin put an end to the transfer of production losses from producer to customer. But some of the producers, instead of earnestly taking up work, were continuing in laziness and when faced with trouble, they concealed themselves behind the bankers of the same nature.

And now these bankers have succeeded in concealing themselves behind the safe of the state.

A special curatory of 17 members distribute one and a half milliard of the state's money. Majority of those men did not know themselves how to manage their own property economically and lost more than was entrusted to them. This is a quick departure from Rasin's answer to economic morality, which says :

### WORK AND SAVE

It marks a fall in the standard of morality, and it is a curious fact that it is inevitably followed by bad economy and consequently a fall in currency.

From the slight but steady fall of the export trade of our country it is seen that the state administratives lack the spirit which creates moral economical powers for creation of values. Export is the difference of produced goods and the return from consumed values. Values, which create morality, prompt men to do work, and surplus is the outcome of morality.

The Governor of the National Bank meant the same thing when he said "Pursue a good economical policy and we will create for you a good currency."

We do not see danger only in the loss of one and a half milliard crowns. The danger is in the standpoint, which we have on our society and the state towards those lower national values, i.e. towards people who break economical morality.

Every citizen, who foresees this danger, is bound by duty to fight against it. We, in our undertaking, also think it our duty to fight and are, therefore, publishing a booklet about this matter for general information. This booklet, which contains facts about our national economy, has been presented to authorities, and it is not our fault that no action has been taken so far.

We feel it our duty to express to our fellow-workers this fatal result of our effort, and particularly to those fellow-workers who in 1922 willingly and knowingly made sacrifices for the betterment of the economical situation of our country.

We did all that was in our power to defend the national deal started at that time.

## **ENOUGH MONEY, BUT LACK OF CONFIDENCE**

Banks which gained the confidence of depositors, have large financial surpluses kept in the National Bank without any interest. For that, as they say, industrial crisis is responsible, but firstly responsible is the lack of enterprise and lack of confidence.

Confidence ! the important and rare basis of all progress and well-being ! Confidence of man to man, society to society. Want of confidence prompted people in the past to construct walls around towns and cities and in our times to make locks and impregnable safes. But confidence creates business houses, factories and undertakings from the savings of depositors. Confidence puts on old man's savings in the hands of a young, capable and courageous man, to increase on one hand the scope and better ways of work and thus increase of wages, and on the other hand effect betterment of quality and reduction of prices, and at the end to increase the paying abilities of the state.

The words of a bank director who explains his greater surplus by saying that he did not see any man to whom he might with a clear mind give a credit of 10,000 crowns, sounds like a dirge.

The most sacred duty of a bank director is to find out such men, such enterprisers, who are worthy of his confidence.

Where lies the guilt ? It is in us all. It lies in the lawyers who patiently overlook the works of those who misused confidence ; the guilt is in our society that excuses open or shrouded bankruptcies. And guilty is he who promised to pay to-day and pays to-morrow.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

*Speech from the year 1932.*

*As in the main basis of great tasks, Thomas Bata tried hard also that his fellow-workers should understand him in the smallest*

*matters. He guarded anxiously the good name of the undertaking and tried that all working with him and even those who left already the undertaking should imbibe this sense of responsibility. The following speech illustrates it:*

Correspondence is not simply the writing of letters. Settlement of correspondence means settlement of things, affairs, business. Therefore, every letter must express the last words in the matter on which it is written.

Correspondence is our only contact with the world. And through it people judge us. Our principle—not to remain indebted to anybody—was shattered by reminders for small sums from past years—the reminders about payments about which none of the leading people knew anything.

Some correspondents thought it especially good to settle correspondence, but keep silent or postpone for a future date the settlement of the demands of a creditor who reminded them for money. This is a shame. Those who remind us by letters for money are perfectly justified. It is necessary to thank them for reminding us and to pay them immediately. To pay immediately is a duty, not an act of kindness.

All correspondence can be classified under two headings, "debit" and "credit." People either want something from us or we want something from them.

If people want something from us, it is likely that they have evidence proving that we owe them something even if they have it written by a piece of chalk on the door. Our correspondence should have a similar character. We should also call for our credits. It is foolish to demand something else or to be reminded twice. Then you must read the same thing twice, which means loss of time. For settlement of such old cases ten times more energy is necessary than if it be settled immediately.

The chief thing in correspondence is to write concisely and to the point without trying to be evasive.

In 1907 I engaged myself with machinery and neglected the office. There was terrible disorder. When I noticed this disorder I dismissed half of my clerical staff, and the other

half feeling that they were insulted by my demands, left me also. During day time I worked in the workshop and in the evening till late at night I settled the correspondence which was mainly written in German. At that time I did not know much German. I used to settle the correspondence, not draft out replies. It was enough to reply, Ja-neinic., Yes-No, for more words I had no time.

Settle all your debts and pay ! It is the only way of writing a correspondence which every businessman of every nationality understands without much effort.

## **RETIREMENT FROM WORK—FAILURE IN WORK— DISMISSAL**

People think more of how to get better paying jobs, but never think of leaving if they do not like the work. And still success in life depends so much upon pleasure in work ! So long as people have enthusiasm in their work, nothing bad comes in their way. They do their work peacefully for a number of years and are even convinced that they do it rightly. But once customer or their manager or their next fellow-worker expresses dissatisfaction with their work and begins to demand a change, better style of work with better result, they become depressed.

The worker begins to be afraid of this new trouble. In his mind he even expected a better position and recognition of merits for his work. Instead of a better position they demand from him something new or improved work which is apparently impossible.

The most weak people find out in themselves some sickness and in it they try to get their salvation. This is, of course, the certain way for absolute failure.

Other people pluck up courage that moment, but not for the right thing. Instead of trying to understand the point of the customer or the chief, they try to convince him that the demanded betterment is impossible and try to satisfy themselves that the reason of his dissatisfaction lies not in their

work, but in personal motives. Thus they lose their increased energy and courage in quarrels and at the end with obstinacy leave their work, exasperated at their former chief and disgusted with their work.

Strong but prudent people of understanding and consideration, who really love their work, will express gratitude to the customer or chief or fellow-worker for pointing out the deficiencies of their work and will try to satisfy them fully. For increased work, if there is any, they try to get rewards by finishing their work, and in case they do not get a reward, or if they cannot cope with the increased work, they part with their customer, chief or fellow-worker in a friendly manner. They know that there is really a great want for people who really love work. They know that the customer or fellow-worker will compare their work with the work of the new man and it is probable that the customer or chief will not forget them especially if those people who replace them do not satisfy duly the demands of the customers. Those capable, reasonable people also know that it is possible that even they after some time may look at the customer's demands from the customer's point of view. They know that the bridge which they left behind them serves not only their honour, but also their benefit, because it connects them with their old work and keeps the way back open, if they find that others do not give them as much satisfaction and rewards as their previous employment.

And really the employees and also employers are sorry for the breach of the bridge between them—a breach which took place at a moment of foolish excitement.

Let us not be afraid of making new agreements, but let us be warned of the fatal decision.

## THE DEFENDER

*While looking to the future and sticking to the principle of carrying on his work to the dictates of a healthy brain and for the service of humanity, Thomas Bata always met, particularly at the beginning, with resistance. It was mostly conservative*



people who opposed Bata with their conservative ideas. Although Thomas Bata was essentially a brave man, he did not like those fights with his opponents, useless as they were. Because he was convinced that truth was on his side and that it was his obligation to defend his work and his fellow-workers, he did not avoid those fights. These were necessary to defend his cause and were waged only in defence. He always tried to convince his opponents by telling them his plans, ideas and proposals, to explain to them the right things in the right perspective, to show them the futility of such fights and to gain their co-operation. The most typical are his discussions with politicians who represented other shoe producers. It is necessary to look upon them and balance their merit in the light of the past years since they had been said or written, to see how the author was accurately following the economic development of the country:—

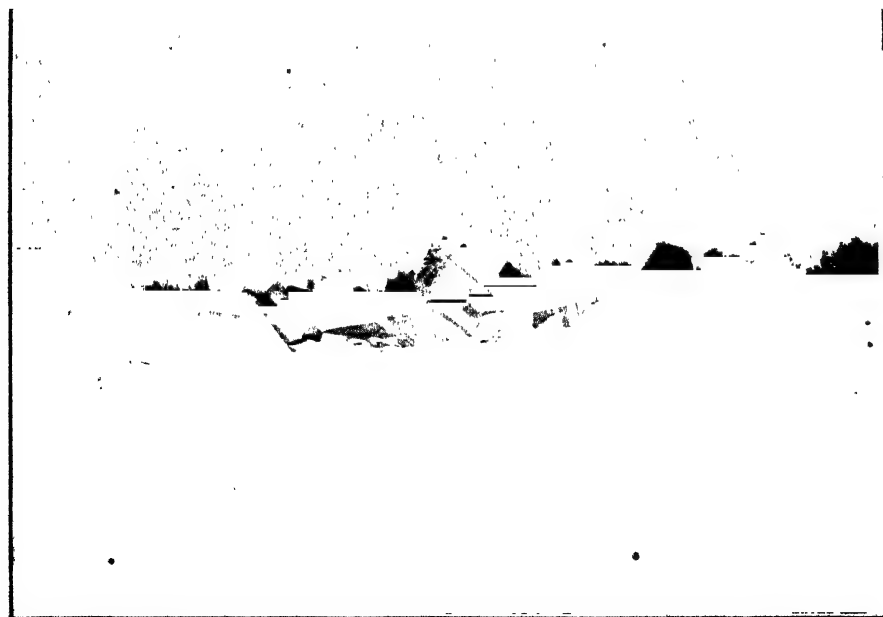
## THE NEW WAYS OF PRODUCTION

*Speech from the year 1924.*

Our undertaking, although its ownership is written in the books in the name of a single individual, in my name alone, is in fact a co-operative undertaking. It differs from many small undertakers who have a share on the result of their departments and are participating from the point of view of acquiring capital in the undertaking. Even now the biggest creditors of our undertaking are its employees and their share on capital grows every year. It will not be long when the majority of mature employees will become partners of the Company. The principle of my undertaking is to make capitalists of my employees. I do not do it out of kindness. My experience tells me that great undertakings can be best built if the undertaker takes upon himself the task of serving the customers and his employees, because only then the customers and employees will serve him serve his ideals and work. In this way the undertaker prevents great losses which all our industrial enterprises suffer. The undertaker can increase the morality of the employees, and every employee works in such undertaking just as he would do in his own concern.



The last photograph of Thomas Bata, taken in the beginning of the year 1932, a few months before his tragic death, on the day of his arrival in Zlin from his great business tour of India and of the Far East.



Pictures of the tragic plane crash in which Thomas Bata lost his life on 12th July, 1932.

It would be silly to think that those insults and indecent remarks hurled against our undertaking and, particularly, against me by certain people at a meeting of shoemakers, will have any baneful effect on the progress of our undertaking. For this unhappy incident I do not hold the shoemakers responsible, but a certain political party which makes use of their misery and tries to employ them for political aims, but unfortunately to their and the party's own loss. After such meetings I always try to find out how I may be helpful to those old-school shoemakers who cannot adapt themselves to the new system of production. I want to prove not only by words but by deeds that any undertaking, which is managed on the widest principles of humanity, can accommodate people of different schools of thought. For my work I do not need the support of anybody, least of all from the state. I only need to be allowed to do my work. The company have no reason to be afraid of the influence of political parties or its workers ; it should not care with which party they enlist. The workers are not only able to support the present social rules, but moreover they are able to work for their betterment.

The future of our Republic depends on how far people will comprehend that in a land so overpopulated the source of prosperity can be found in industry only. If especially undertakers realise this, production will be increased so much that industrial products of all kinds will come within the means of even the poorest. The peasants and farmers will get from chemical and machine industries all they need to double their output, employing the same amount of labour as at present. Sufficiency is the expression of well-being. Work done by hand brings misery to both the producer and consumer.

*One of the greatest attacks against Thomas Bata was made against him in a campaign which proclaimed that he was not a shoemaker at all. Thomas Bata faced the campaign by a speech, published on the next page, and also instituted a case in the court which confirmed the fact that not only was he a well-trained shoemaker but that he belonged to a family of shoemakers who had*

*carried on this trade for three hundred years, and this craft was handed down from generation to generation in his family for a long time past.*

## **THE FALSE DOCUMENT OF QUALIFICATION**

M. Mlcoch, a member of the Parliament, wanted to prove in the House of Deputies that the "Traders' Society" in Uherske Hradiste gave me a false certificate about my shoemaker's qualification. He tried to prove that in the Traders' Society books was entered the name of my late brother Antonin Bata and that Antonin has been scratched out and the name Thomas written instead. Mr. Frank Dvorsky, the Secretary of the Traders' Society, who wrote these documents, published a few days ago a copy of the book and showed it to Mr. Vrana, who was sent by M. P. Mlcoch to Uherske Hradiste to enquire into the matter. He showed him where in the column "Apprentice" was firstly written Antonin Bata and in the column "Master" was written Thomas Bata. He explained that Antonin Bata was the father and master and Thomas Bata, son and apprentice, and that the names were entered by mistake in the wrong places and thus it appeared that the father was an apprentice to the son. Some of the precursors found out this mistake and corrected it. He showed further that Antonin Bata, my elder brother, was enlisted in the same book a few pages later.

Mr. Mlcoch ! Your statement is that the papers about my qualification is false and you have 14 witnesses who can give sworn evidence to prove that :

(a) I have never been an apprentice in shoe handicraft

(b) I left for America at the age of 17

I challenge this statement here before the public and I tell you that you have not a single witness who can give sworn evidence to support it.

I request you to repeat your words again outside the walls of Parliament so that I may start proceedings against you, for defending my honour and the honour of the Shoemakers'

Association before the court. I need no false certificates to prove my abilities as a shoemaker. Even as a boy of 5 years I made lasts and miniature shoes from leather wastages. I sat longer at my cobbler's stool than with books. In my father's workshop I learned the craft while I was 14 and later I worked as an employee. In my brother's workshop and in other places and foreign lands I worked for more than 7 years. I did nothing in my life except making or repairing shoes. I travelled all over the globe to gain every bit of knowledge of this craft.

Even my ancestors, so far as the Zlin matriculate can trace, were all shoemakers. My mother, grand-mother and great-grand-mother were also from shoemakers' families.

From the 17th century, and who knows for how long before, shoemaking was the only source of livelihood of my family.

And now M. P. Mlcoch blames the government for not having prevented me from pursuing my craft.

Does M. P. Mlcoch speak on behalf of the craftsmen ?

No, he does not speak on behalf of those craftsmen who have conscience and who love their craft.

My reverence for so many of my ancestors demands me to stand up and defend the honour of our craftsmen of whom I am one.

## **THE ANTI-BATA MEETING OF SHOEMAKERS IN BRNO**

*Speech from the year 1924.*

The craft's political party have instigated the struggle of shoemakers against me. They organize a number of meetings of shoemakers in which speeches are made to prove that the work of our undertaking brings misery and ruin to shoemakers, while the undertaking itself flourishes. After every such meeting I received many threatening letters, which clearly show the spirit in which those meetings are held.

The shoemaker's misery is great. It is older than the shoe factories. I am acquainted with misery, because it was my former partner.

The shoemaker's misery mainly rises from the cobbler's stool. Every cobbler trains on the average about ten apprentices, and of them remain in the craft only those who have not courage to part with that patron of the craft.

In a small, narrow room lives the cobbler's family. In the same room two apprentices and a journeyman help the cobbler. They work from early morning till the time of going to bed late at night. Cleaning is done once a week on Saturday if there is no work for the whole night. Only in summer the room gets some air and light, as ventilation in winter is impossible. The room is always full of people, young and old. For cleaning there is neither time nor place. Insects and foul air are the biggest agencies of the shoemakers' misery.

How differently lives the shoe factory worker !

His quarter is meant for **his** family only. From work he comes into a clean, well-ventilated house, where there is no bad smell from rotten pieces of leather or other materials.

Mr. Milcoch's fertile brain has found out that all those 60,000 shoemakers who had no work supposedly due to our fault, might very well be employed to work as agitators to serve his purpose. Therefore, he made them believe that their misery could be removed only by his help and by the help of the state.

He proposes to introduce a bill prohibiting shoe producers to undertake the repair of shoes. In other words, the shoe producer must be deprived of the right of correcting his mistakes which he made on the shoes.

He knows that such a law is immoral because all laws, God's or Man's, ordain that man should repair and improve what he has spoilt.

Our departments for repairing shoes are not calculated to run on profit, but on loss. The main object of these departments is to find out the mistakes made during production and remove them without delay ; to learn from old shoes all the defects of our work and to improve our system of production.

Steam and electricity mainly work in the shoe factories. In huge halls, which look more like cathedrals than a shoe factory, one man with the help of two others produces 30 pairs of good shoes in 8 hours—the same number of pairs as his old colleague produced in a month in more than double the present working hours each day.

In one department machines construct machinery and tools for repairs to serve the customer by cheap and immediate repair.

Chemists in the laboratory work on experiments to enable the customers even to make small repairs themselves without difficulty.

The department works hard for reduction of production costs and prices of new shoes so that customers might leave shoes as soon as they are worn out, just as we discard old hats.

The prosperity of the citizens and also the producers depends solely upon the collaboration of expert engineers and courageous and devoted undertakers. Work done by hand brings misery to the customer as well as to the worker.

My life's task is to create an undertaking based on the highest principles of humanity, which can compete successfully with the world's greatest undertakings in offering cheap and perfect products to the customers and bring the best reward to the employees and the undertaking.

Such an undertaking cannot be built only for the consumption of our small Republic. Low wages and high productional prices are due to this low consumption.

Therefore, we try to co-operate with all the world.



The shoe industry is facing great obstacles at present in the world's market. Every country knows that if she fails now in stabilizing her position in the shoe industry, later her shoe trade will be pressed down in her own country, as it is with the production of sewing machines and cars.

In our hard struggle we do not have to worry much about shoemakers or our bigger competitors ; for them there is and will always be enough work.

We watch carefully and with anxiety the quick steps of our world's competitors in the market of more advanced countries where the masses are already better off, where there is less misery and people do not belong to such political parties, as represented by Mr. Mlcoch, who tries to check the development of the cobblers' prosperity for his own unclean political intentions.

## **AT A MEETING OF SHOEMAKERS IN PRAGUE**

*Speech from the year 1931.*

Colleagues,

You convene a meeting in which you protest against our work. This meeting you hold in Prague ; it would have been more reasonable if you met in Zlin.

All of you thus might see with your own eyes things as they are in Zlin, against which you protest. Here in Prague you protest against something which neither you nor many of your leaders have even seen. But it is necessary for a man to know and see things before he takes any action.

I am convinced that the majority of you would be enthusiastic about the new life we have created there. And we have done it firstly for you, shoemakers, and for your children.

The shoes in our undertaking are produced firstly by shoemakers, and all our shoes are repaired by shoemakers only. My only care is to ensure better days for those who produce and repair these shoes and also for those who purchase and wear them. In the old system of work, as you well know, both the parties could not even dream of such a life.

You all know how little you used to earn and are earning now from repairs. The shoemakers in our repairing workshops who work according to our new methods, earn during 8 hours of work more than your total turnover. It is better also for the customer, because he gets better repair and comfort, which you cannot give him by your old system of work.

If you see our work in Zlin and our life which we live there you would surely be impressed, and tell me the very same things I have heard hundreds of cobblers say after seeing our works : "Mr. Bata, I am already old, you cannot change me. I will somehow live. But take my son and make a new man of him just like those thousands of young people whom you have trained up."

I invite all of you assembled here to come to Zlin. We are not afraid of your opposition but we wish you to be our friends, because it will bring benefit to both the parties and, above all, it will bring benefit to you and your children.

Also, you should not be afraid of us, afraid of life ! Do not believe those who magnify your misery ; they want to use you as tools for their unclean motive, they try to kindle such feelings in you which bring you only loss, but bring them gain in their political career.

According to the latest statistics, there are not even 30,000 independent shoemakers, the majority of you making shoes only in winter and doing agricultural work during the rest of the year. In our workshops, shops and repair shops there are 27,635 persons working to-day. Only in our repair shop we trained 2,320 shoemakers from your side during the last year. From among those trained shoemakers 1·3 per cent became independent shopmanagers with incomes several times multiplied.

Within the next year we want to open another 2,000 shops and repair shops in those foreign countries where the modern technique in production and repair of shoes is so far unknown. For those places we will require thousands of shoemakers. For many thousands of you we have jobs in chemical cleaning

of shoes, a newly started branch of our craft, which has been started with the object of freeing our women from that dirty work and for removing dust and dirt from our household. In this branch you can earn during 8 hours work more than you earned during 16 hours.

All those colleagues who think that it is not for them to work elsewhere but only independently, I advise to unite and form a union of shoe-repairers on the lines of the proposals we have just made to the trade ministry and which we publish in the form of a booklet for your consideration.

Everyone of you may be happy in your own way if you free yourselves from the baneful influence of others which breaks your will and courage for work and life.

These agencies, fed by our competitors, try to suppress our work in foreign countries and those competitors who, when we refuse to take their bad shoes for sale, agitate against us in the hope that by this way they will be able to press us to accept their bad products.

From those quarters you are being told that we do not pay as much taxes as we should and that this is laden on your competing ability. In the year 1927 our taxes amounted to 60 per cent of all the taxes from the Czechoslovak shoecraft, although our production was hardly 40 per cent of all.

In the year 1930 we expect 80 per cent. Equally false is the remark that the state is faced with disadvantages from our undertaking. The taxes for 1930 will give to the state only from our work 50 per cent more income than all the shoe-producers paid together in 1927.

From the evil influence of agitation and reckless rivalry which these elements create, your interests are not safe either because, it creates only dissolution and disputes between those engaged in shoemaking. We need mutual friendship to create such a shoecraft on which all the world will look with admiration because, all the world will derive benefit from it.

Our inhabitants use over 50 million pairs of shoes which need weekly chemical cleaning. For this the services of at least 50,000 people are necessary, and those men are needed who have experience in shoemaking.

The shoes our people wear need yearly a great many repairs. In this branch alone there is work for another 20,000 shoemakers.

Ten million people in our Republic need every fortnight a special treatment of their feet—pedicure. Here is also employment for 35,000 people.

In all those new sections of shoe service there is room for 100,000 shoemakers in our Republic alone, according to our calculation. And what about the whole world? There are not enough men in our Republic who can cope with all the work that waits for the shoemakers in the world.

Take up this work either along with us or independently. Do not believe the sceptics who speak about unemployment in shoecraft and who concentrate on bringing you to misery and help you into unemployment. Think of yourselves, but firstly think of your children! They must not move in dust and humiliation to suffer those miseries of the old system of shoemaking to which you, as well as I myself, have been victims.

## **MY MEMOIRS**

*Speech from the year 1926.*

From America I brought enthusiasm for the workmen, but enthusiasm alone is not sufficient for success, especially if there is lack of experience and knowledge among them.

I liked the more reasonable relation between the worker and the employer which contributes much to their mutual prosperity. The workers have self-consciousness no less than the employer. They feel they are equal. Such self-consciousness I advocate for the benefit of the Workers' Unions one of which I too was a member.

On the way back through England and Germany I stopped to visit some factories and worked there as an employee. In one of the factories I cleaned the heels. When I started the work, my neighbours attracted the attention of all other workers and asked them to come and see the fool from America. They thought that I worked too quickly, and according to their code of morality it was not honest for a good worker. In America the workers did not admire me. There I was almost always far behind my colleagues. A good worker cleaned there even 1,200 pairs in 9 hours of working time. My highest output was at that time 800 pairs. In Germany some of the machines turned over only 100 pairs in 10 hours of working time. In the German workshops the spirit of co-operation was entirely wanting at that time. Every worker did his work negligently and thus made the work of the next man difficult. And as the output was low, wages were low too, although rates were high.

I wanted to introduce in Zlin the American system of work. I called the workers and told them that I had found a working system by which they would earn much more.

I told them that I wanted equality. Let workers organize themselves in Workers' Unions and so equalize the level of our strength. I thought that this arrangement would bring the undertaking such benefit that the worker backed by his organization, would have no fear that his rates would be reduced if he succeeds in increasing his output.

I invited Mr. Krapka from Prerov, editor of a social-democratic organ, to make speeches to the workers.

Soon after the beginning there was an unfortunate incident. The foremen in the workshops had lost all control. It came to my knowledge that after I had left the meeting the spokesmen told the people that I was too clever, that all this I was doing because I knew that trouble was at my door and that I wanted to flatter the workers for my ultimate personal gain.

In the workshops the workers began to drink beer at the time of work even to the extent of drunkenness. When I wanted to dismiss somebody for this breach of discipline the organisation stood up behind him. Two such cases I let pass, but the third one I refused to excuse. A deputation of workers came with a demand to dismiss the worker Bebar—who is still with us—who dared to criticise in some newspapers the committee of their organisation, out of grudge, as they said, because they did not elect him to the committee.

I tried to explain to them that their quarrels in newspapers cannot be the deciding factor about the work of an employee in the factory and his dealing towards the undertaking.

They did not care to understand. They were conscious of their power. They knew that all the workers were organised and that they could very well dictate.

Therefore, they organised a strike. But at that time it was nothing unusual. Whenever they came to my office for discussion they always ordered the workers to stop the machines probably to add more weight to their words. But the machines did not start even after their return to the workshops. The struggle was begun. Struggle for power, for the right of the last word. A few days later the Chief Secretary of the Union came from Prague. After investigating all the circumstances, he scolded the strikers.

"This," he said, "is not reasonable. This is not enough reason to strike work". He advised the strikers to adopt better tactics. They decided to demand 20 per cent increment of wages and the Committee demanded the start of negotiations. The negotiations we did not start at all.

But we started work immediately against the threat of the strikers. For a long time our work was not good. It was necessary to re-organise the whole staff ; our losses were big and wages reduced to half due to bad work of unskilled workmen.

But we did not take back any single man who took part in that unreasonable strike.

From that time we have in our factory no Workers', Union or any similar organisation. But since that time, *i.e.*, within 20 years, we have not had a single strike in the factory and the standard of our workers rose to the highest level in our Republic.

Only after 8 years when, in 1915 those strikers lost their jobs in the competitors' factories and were contemplating joining the armies if they did not find work, we took them back.

For this act we received from the social democratic organisation very warm thanks.

### **AN OPEN LETTER**

*Thomas Bata's letter to the President of U. K. (Leather Workers' Union) Deputy V. Johanis in Prague.*

*This open letter is the reply given in a series of open correspondence in which Thomas Bata defended himself against the attack of Mr. Johanis in a meeting in Prague.*

Dear Sir,

I received your letter dated 1st inst. Your solidity in expression of rebukes towards me and my work serves your honour, but not so much your next decision, *i.e.*, your refusal to prove yourself, by your personal visit to Zlin, as to how far your rebukes are right, if they are right at all.

You accuse me that my system of production takes off the work and livelihood of 40,000 workers in the craft. I am sending you some photographs of our cobblers and their workshops, working and living according to the old system, which you defend so much, and those same cobblers in new surrounding—workshops arranged according to my system. Yes, I took off them, and especially off their apprentices and workers, the dust and slavery of toiling as you well know.

I am sending you some photographs of cobblers from India and Java, so that you might, as an expert, compare what prospects the European cobbler has if he does not follow the latest system of work.

To-day when the Czechoslovakian shoe industry is the first in the world, there are working in this craft more people than at any time before. And before I myself stop my work there will be not a single cobbler here who will not have his hands full of work while serving our inhabitants, just as we are planning.

You affirm that my system keeps out of work people older than 40 years. When 8 years ago I with my fellow-workers began to make shoes on a wider scale, there was in our undertaking 180 of such men. Yes, almost all of them gradually retired from the workers' sides. They eliminated themselves, and only very few of them are in usual work. Almost all are foremen, managers,\* incharges or at least instructors, modellers or controllers. Others are shopmanagers, repair-shopmanagers. And some of them have left us. They came to us without a penny and when they had amassed some capital they left us to become owners of houses or farms from the income of which they are now living. We feel the loss of those men and still need them.

Of all the difficulties which we daily fight the greatest one is the lack of mature people over 40 years who are able to be leaders and teachers of those young men who have flexible fingers and courageous hearts, but little or no experience at all.

I never dismissed any employee for old age and I provided work even for people over 60 years, although I feel it my duty as an employer to pay my people such that in their 40 years they can live on their savings and then, if they like, can work independently with their own capital and experience and not by the help of their hands only.

I am convinced that a man who begins work at 24 and leads an economic life will have saved enough capital by his fortieth year upon the income of which he can live very well.

I send all details about it separately.



To your rebuke that I interfere with the production of goods which are not connected with the production of shoes, I tell you that so far we produce only such goods which are connected with and necessary for the production of shoes. We engage ourselves in dealing with other products only for the sake of giving our fellow-workers the right value in goods while purchasing their life's necessities. You probably have in mind our business in cycles. For your information I tell you that we do not produce cycles. We only sell them and are trying to limit the sale only to our fellow-workers and their families. We started that business when we found that our people daily coming to work from far and near must pay for this unavoidable vehicle twice or thrice as much as people in Holland or other places pay. The high price was due to unhealthy speculation of cycle-producers who did not like to supply people their products for reasonable prices. The same is with all other products, which we sell in our warehouse. We are selling them simply to control the price and quality of the goods that our employees need.

You accuse me also of being a producer-millionaire. I am a millionaire and I need my millions just as you need your pen or talent as a speaker, and without my millions I would be for mankind as useless as you without your talent.

The economic and wise management of those millions bring me and my family the same livelihood, as your talent does to you or to your friends. Moreover, this deal presses me to work even overtime. But in this world everyone has different sources of pleasure or torture according to the standpoint one takes towards his work and duties.

And at the end I reply to that point which you consider important. You rebuke me and say that I prevent my fellow-workers from becoming members of any Workers' Organisation, although I myself am a member of the Association of Industrialists. You know well that I am not a member of the Industrialists' Association for the sake of securing protection or safeguards against the workers. On the contrary, I am in discord at this point with others, because I feel that it is the

duty of all employers to contest between themselves for higher salary of workers and not to organise themselves with the object of reducing their wages.

You yourself are so long in the shoemaking craft that you know the story of the development of our work. You know that in 1905-1906 I called the leading people of your organisation and party to our factory with the intention of organising our workers and that I myself was present at your meetings. You know that at that time all my workers were members of your Workers' Organisation and you know what was the result of it.

Not to repeat all those facts again, I present you herewith all the details which I published in the newspapers five years ago.

At that time you did not take the right standpoint as you have not taken even to-day. You came to Zlin and instead of telling your people that by unreasonable violence they were returning the friendship and effort to help them, you took the standpoint that their demands should be formulated in another way, that they should base their resistance on a demand for 20 per cent increase of wages.

Between your view on the sense of organisation and my view on work and life, there is, of course, a great difference. You still seem to support the idea that the most important object of Worker's Organisation or Union is to create bad feeling between employees and employer, to make each disbelieve the other.

My standpoint is that I would rather work alone with my own hands than with a man who has no confidence, no faith in me, who looks upon me with distrust, as one does upon a dishonest man and as you in your newspaper and also in your letter try to paint me.

On this basis, co-operation between us is impossible because, moral reward, *i.e.*, friendship of my fellow-workers towards me is the highest reward which I demand for my work and which you do not want to give me.

If you would come to Zlin to see things as they really are and to consider how you might help, surely you would be successful. But your last speech at Prague and also your last letter endeavour to deepen more the abyss between us which is to be regretted because, both the parties would be affected by this. Because neither you nor I are in this case, simply private persons, discussing private controversies, and as in it the public is interested, I feel it right to make our correspondence public. Therefore, let me inform you that this correspondence we shall publish in our newspaper on the 23rd inst. if before that date you do not think otherwise and assign sufficient reason therefor.

Zlin, 12th October 1931.

***Thomas Bata.***

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THE HUMANITARIAN



*Although many photographs of Thomas Bata have been preserved there are not two in which there is the same expression and there is not a single one which can give a real picture of the living Thomas Bata. Every feature of that head and face, marked with so many wrinkles on the forehead, round the eyes, lips and nose looked like moving continuously in life just as in the torrent of a mountain stream move about pebbles and rocks and the bed of the stream is sparkled by a thousand reflections on a summer day.*

*It was firstly sentimentality and passion which inspired the most daring desires, ideas and plans within that proud angular forehead, cut across between the eyes when his car collided with a carriage in his young age.*

*Bata was conscious of his great dynamic power and knew also how to check it—he knew how to convert it into the main dynamic and motive force of all his work. Let us remember his words . . . . . “When I bought my first car, I locked it up for a fortnight in the garage to create in myself the abilities to use it rightly. . . .” or . . . . . “higher ideals they have been which have repressed our passions and desires when we saw that these might harm our work.” And at the end I remember one incident: Once he felt that his prestige and the prestige of his work was at stake. He came to a strong decision which did not leave any scope or possibility for anyone else to effect any change in it. It was Saturday evening—action according to his decision was to start from Sunday. Sunday morning he called me and began to explain the motives which lead him to take that step. He spoke slowly, at long intervals, in broken sentences like a man who is alone and thinking loudly.*

*“Hostility! of what hostility should I be afraid? If I should be afraid of anybody, I should be afraid of myself alone.”*

*He entirely forgot my presence in the room.*

*Minutes passed—a deep silence prevailed. “Change that letter in such and such a way” he told me, awake from long meditation, and entirely changed his decision.*

*All emotions, which become sound and reasonable with experience, he lived through much deeper, more stronger and more livelier. The joy and sorrow, anger and love, hope and disillusion.*

*recognitions and insults were like counter-poles, in which was self-ablaze and aroused his creative power, just as electric energy passes between two poles to produce light. His life's success, not only that of business but firstly success as a human being, had its main spring in his knowledge of things, his intelligence and will to transfer his desires into actions. Thus his desires he worked out with such economy and in a disciplined way as the steam in a boiler is operated by the hand of an intelligent mechanic who knows what he wants and esteems those powers which he has at his disposal and knows how to make the best use of them. In the same measure had grown his successes and tasks and also increased the number of people having confidence in his leadership. He was not a pleasant chief and not a pleasant fellow-worker to those who sought an easy job and even to those who were satisfied with the normal, simple good system of work. And still people loved him—his employees and also those who were not his dependants and even those who opposed him. In him was the warm human heart and intensively working brain searching always for better ways forward. He was seen as a man indefatigable in work and simple and modest in private life, who lived in complete uniformity with the words he uttered and thought. Therefore, he never was irresolute. He was certain that as a man he was doing his duty well. This is how we knew him as a mature man. For some he was too left-minded, for others too right-minded. In one thing a radicalist and again conservative in the other, but he pursued his own way directed only by one principle in which he religiously believed: the principle of service. And again, not that somebody theoretically convinced him about the morality of this principle, but because in it he felt the prime law of eternal life: what serves, preserves and grows.*

*Thomas Bata—the man—is dead. But his ideals, his men whom he created, hundreds of thousands of his followers are here—the work is living! In it will always live and will live in all that was eternal in the personality of Thomas Bata.*

## **MY ATTITUDE TO WORK**

Comparatively, work is a better friend to me than to the other less happy people. By my work I am carrying out mainly my own ideas. While other people are carrying out theirs to the orders of others.

If my work extends to even sixteen hours a day I do not want to say that I am working more than others, because in my work there is always some pleasure and education for me.

This favourable attitude to work can hardly be attained by everyone. The fourteen year old boy, copying letters, certainly will have a desire rather to run outside in the open because there probably he will find more pleasure in doing his bit in harmony with his will.

Therefore, I regard the intervention of law on the reduction of working time as proper and I am a pioneer for this since my youth. The proof of it lies in the fact that since its inception our factory has a working time of 10 hours a day although the law permitted 11 hours a day up to the year 1918.

I did not agree with the starting of eight-hour-working day immediately after the war, because just after the war much work was necessary to revive the slump in business, to increase wages to improve the buying capacities of people. But I did not protest against it, because although I thought it premature, yet in principle it was right. I tried to better the machinery of our enterprise, so that people need not pay for the shortening of working hour by smaller incomes.

I am sure that the working time will further be shortened and I hope that soon in our enterprise we shall be able to shorten the working week from six working days to five.

But my working time even then will be up to complete exhaustion, because I know no greater pleasure than work.

I think that work is the best friend of my health. When I was 40, I planned my work for a further period of ten years. At 45 I said to myself that I will work another twenty years. And at 50 I promised to be faithful to work upto my last breath.

We said to each other that we shall hold each other's hands until death doth us part and we shall sing in chorus that most beautiful song :

We shall not die on a bed,  
We shall die on a horse ;  
And when from the horse we shall fall down,  
The sword will cling.



My work has only one object : to serve life. I am enthusiastic about life. I love life. I wish to live it ten times over without change, even under any condition. I wish to have ten sons. Not to divide my property amongst them but to teach them to live and to work.

Now I have got thousands of them although only one bears my name. And the best of them will receive my fiddle. Of course not for playing to himself alone, but for the benefit of others.

My own son has not even that prospect which many boys of poor parents have to become a master. He will not study in any special or high school and get preferential treatment or priority. After passing from the secondary school he will become a free craftsman like his father and own as much property as he can earn.

## BATA AND EDISON

*The man whom Thomas Bata respected most was Thomas Alva Edison. In this man he really saw the realisation of the creative powers of humanity. The following two expressions—the first on the occasion of the celebration of the invention of electric bulb (lamp), the second on the death of Edison—expressed not only admiration but also effort to be nearest the example of the man whom he named the greatest servant of mankind.*

### THOMAS ALVA EDISON, U.S.A.

Daily we are deriving benefits from your work and your many inventions. Your work, done for the help of mankind, makes life easier for everyone, every day.

We feel indebted to you. We can pay you only by our gratitude and effort to utilize your inventions not only for our benefit, but for the benefit of all.

Your mental fecundity and capacity to work even at this age proves to all sluggards that even the heaviest of work, as you do, does not shorten human life.

Each day of your fruitful life increases the optimism of mankind.

On behalf of 12,000 fellow-workers I wish you sound health

Zlin, 26th October, 1927.

*Thomas Bata.*

## **THE CONDOLENCE CEREMONY FOR THOMAS A. EDISON IN ZLIN.**

*On Wednesday, 21st October, 1931, morning before the start of work 25,000 employees of Bata factory met at the factory's courtyard to pay their homage to T. A. Edison.*

*In the middle of the great masses and silent workshops stood Thomas Bata and on behalf of all his fellow-workers expressed his gratitude to the dead pioneer of work by the following speech :*

My fellow-workers !

To-day in America is the burial of Thomas Alva Edison. I feel it our duty that we, whose lives he made so easier and pleasanter, should send to the President of the United States of America, Herbert Hoover, the following telegram :

Mr. President !

Twenty-five thousand of Bata's fellow-workers thank the American nation for the creation of such an environment in which was born a great servant of all mankind—Thomas Alva Edison."

And now it only remains for us to thank God that he gave to this man so much energy and such a long life.

*Thomas Bata's personality in work, in undertaking and especially his understanding of the leader's duties were the most developed. He had a very clear and very strict consciousness of his obligations towards the people in the undertaking and towards those who purchased his products. "The chief's duty is to procure work for the people, to select right men for the right places, provide them with machinery and good workshops and arrange everything in such a way that they can earn much and sell cheap. If he does not know this or if he does not want to do it, he is not a capable chief. He is more an obstacle to his people than a help." He clearly expressed this in the following two expressions:*

### **"DUTY OF LEADERS."**

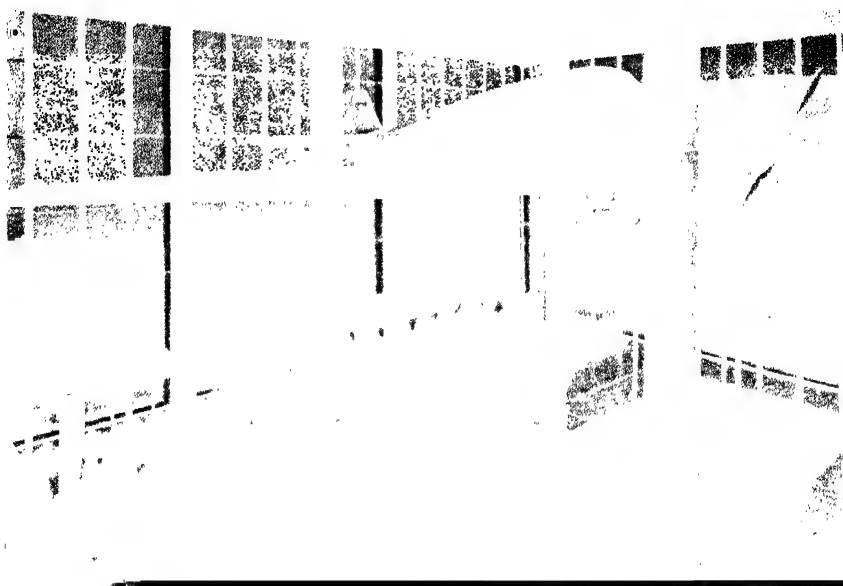
To Mr. X.

A few days ago I went to the sole tanneries and I saw that people were loading the heavy pieces of leather thus: They carried the heavy pieces of leather from the workshop on their back, get to the first floor by the stairs, wherefrom they climbed upon the car and loaded it. This I saw in the tannery of Mr. Y. I entered the tannery with the intention of calling Mr. Y and order him that next week he should do nothing but carry the heavy pieces of leather himself just as his men were doing and we will give him the same salary which is given for this work, so that he will know how by the lack of management from his side his people were toiling uselessly.

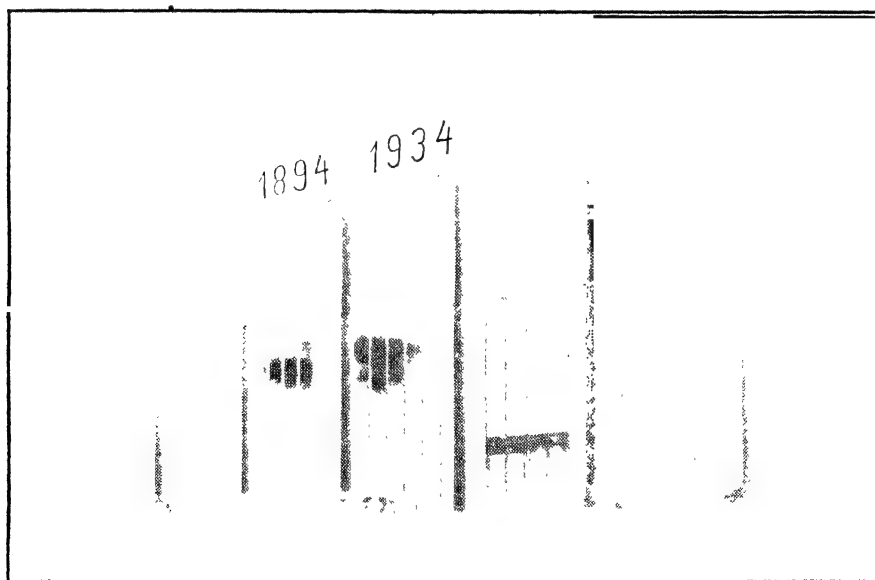
At that time Mr. Y. was not there and thus he escaped the consequences of his negligence.

I made a mistake. I forgot altogether that the wrong steps taken by Mr. Y. should be ended in you, who is his superior and who at least should know how work should be carried on in the workshop. If I remembered then I would have decided that this business of loading leather on the car should also be practiced by you besides Mr. Y.

On my request Mr. F. presents me a proposal of how easier this work can be done in the tannery, for leading the work of which you, Mr. X., are paid.



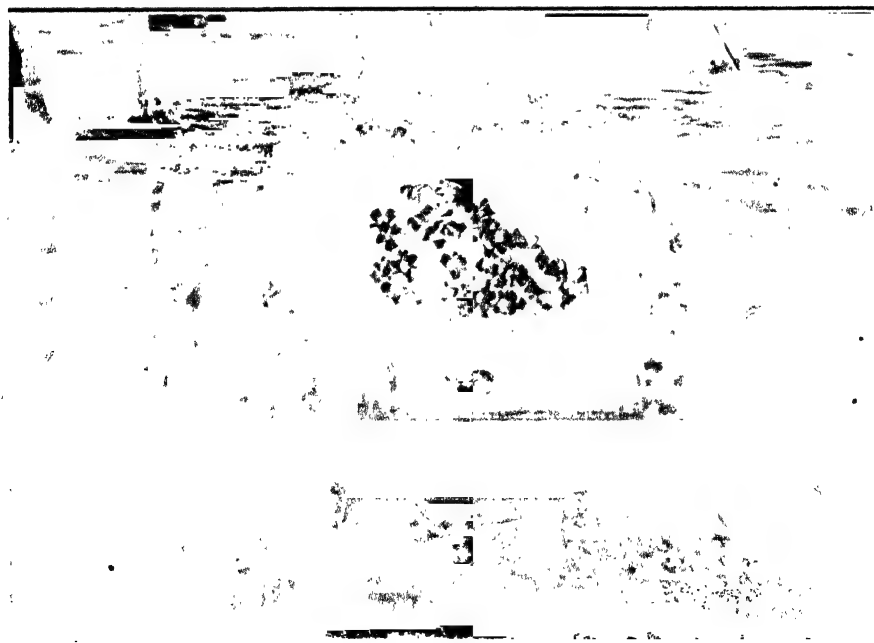
The plane, in which Thomas Bata died, installed in the Thomas Bata Memorial in Zlin.



The Thomas Bata's Memorial in Zlin.



The funeral of Thomas Bata.



The grave of Thomas Bata in the forest cemetery in Zlin.

His proposals are right, but it is not right that you get money for management but sit idle in the office and leave your work to be done by me and Mr. F.

The problem of transporting leather from the tannery of Mr. Y, I leave to you for solution. Mr. F. will tell you what I think as to how this problem can be solved. Engage yourself in solving those and other problems, which are necessary to be solved so that the things I have noticed shall not be repeated again. Zlin, 13th May, 1931.

## REASONS FOR PROSPERITY

Thousands of people can spend more time after work on play grounds, in education or in enjoyment, if a few of them, who bear the responsibility of leadership, sacrifice their free time in solving a great problem: how to make the production system more perfect so that people may produce more and thus earn more by working for a shorter period and with less toil.

## “TECHNIQUE OF JUSTICE”

*This manifesto, which was meant for the inhabitants of a certain village, consists of interesting standpoint of Thomas Bata to human weaknesses and their inclination towards what is wrong. He was not satisfied with merely a moral research and the verdict of the case, but he was seeking to find a way of impressing upon the people not only the desirability but the advantage of always being upright in their own interest.*

Citizens !

Yesterday again there was a fire in your village and I have had the opportunity to be present there first of all.

I am not a professional fireman, but the impetus to help in putting out fire comes from my sense of duty towards humanity and therefore I helped in extinguishing many fires.

Your yesterday's fire appeared to me not as a disaster to people, but as a theatre. Majority of you were standing with hands in your pockets, cigarettes in your mouths and your faces even betrayed signs of pleasure when the flames were shooting forward and endangered the next two houses.

Your children were not frightened by this unexpected disaster. On the contrary, when the fire was the biggest, they spoke among themselves that you had already selected a new place for new building—very same things were spoken about this fire like the previous ones in your village long before.

After I had left, you put all furniture saved back into the flames.

During the last three years there were nine fires in your village, which destroyed 21 out of your 115 houses, *i.e.*, 6 per cent of the houses.

Considering the expenses of the fire insurance companies, you should pay 12 per cent insurance premium against the value for which your houses are insured. You have insured your houses for about 60—100,000 crown each, and thus you should pay an annual premium of 6—10,000 over and above 2—300 crowns you pay now.

If the directors of the insurance companies, with which you are insured, were to do justice, they should realise from you high premium and then cancel the contracts with you, as mentioned in the agreement.

In our district of Zlin there are villages, in which there was no fire during the last century. This is a proof that people there really want to extinguish the fire. The citizens of those villages pay 200 crowns as premium just as you do, but as they are honest, they ought to pay hardly one-fourth. The other three-fourth they pay for those villages where people want to have fire and do not want to extinguish it.

I am sure that it would not come so far with your morality, if insurance companies would increase your fire premium from 200 to 5,000 crowns, according to the reputation of your village.

Such a step by the insurance companies would be far more effective than all moral speeches. And then you would feel the consequence of your negligence and you would be

forced to insure only those most necessary things, if you had not to pay insurance premium only as high as all your annual incomes.

The directors of insurance companies make criminals of weak people by their money. It is only easy for them to get money from the pockets of honest people and give it to those dishonest.

It is more easy than to arrange insurance technique according to human naturalness.

Realise, citizens, that by such actions you bring about moral ruin to your families and villages, that your villages contaminate your neighbours and bring them misery.

## AMERICANISM

*Some of Bata's opponents alleged that he copied his system from America, that all that he introduced in Zlin and elsewhere were nothing more and nothing less than the so called "Americanism." What he said about it is seen in the following few lines:*

Americanism—that is an empty word. No—isms helped anybody and will ever help. The first thing necessary is courage and then self-consciousness and optimism of undertakers and responsible economical leaders. They must declare that their difficulties nobody will solve but they themselves and that they will not leave them. They must rely on their own energy and work only.

## THE MACHINES AND THE PEOPLE

It is the duty of everyone of us to be clean, healthy and rich.

People are interested mostly in how to be rich and they think that the other two qualities will come to them automatically.

Partly they are right, because cleanliness and health the rich can maintain more easily than the poor although the conversable way is more practicable.



Some time ago I wrote that in the Czechoslóvak Republic there is place for 13 million millionaires. I may say to-day that in our country there is place for 20 million millionaires, as there is in England for 50 million, but at that time our Republic had only 13 million inhabitants and I wanted to say that every citizen in every state can become wealthy.

Everybody wants to be rich; this desire is beneficial to our life. My work would benefit a lot if I could succeed to convince all that everyone can attain riches by work.

Creation of wealth becomes easier with the development of culture. Watt, saved us much trouble when he invented a system of how to make cakes without toil, how to complete work without physical toil, how—with the help of pieces of coal from the depth—to gain wealth, which people even did not dream of.

Since then have come to the world many other saviours. They are electricity, telephone, railways, ~~cars~~, planes and thousands of other machines and inventions. All those helpers are ready to complete even the most difficult parts of work without our aid and are ready to provide us with all that our life needs, *i.e.*, all those which we call wealth.

Do those things really help us? Yes, they do. But then why so many people assert that they do not; some even hold that those new inventions are ruining us, and they long to see the old "Golden Times."

It is true that there are many such people who think that the world's technical progress is turned against mankind or that it is turned especially against their work or craft. There are also such people who believe that technical progress is directed especially against them or against their interests. And besides them there are also those who do not believe all these but still cry their voice hoarse in chorus with others that inventions and machines or rationalisation are guilty of all the evils in this world.

The reasons why people see enemies in inventions and machineries, are many. The greatest difficulty is that those giants do not help all people in the same measure.

Such inequality irritates our heart and takes from us the consideration for judging the effect machines and technical progress have on our life.

The cobbler with whom machinery is competing in the production of shoes, is so excited and prejudiced against machinery that he wants back those "Golden Times."

Which "Golden Time" we wish to come ?

Do we want only those times when shoes were not produced by machines or those times when shoes were not worn at all ?

In the first case, the demand is for those days to come when machines served us in the same measure as our competitors and this our desire is understandable purely from the standpoint of personal interest because, everyone wishes rather to be first than to be last. But if we call for those times when machines were not used at all we must go too far back.

We must go back to those days when there was no steam engine, when there was no hand driven loom, because even a wooden loom is, after all, a machine. So far back those antagonists of machinery do not want to go, because they know well that in winter we must then clothe ourselves in bear skins and go to caves ; all the antagonists of machinery know that there are not sufficient bear skins and enough caves for all of us.

Thus let us stand by the example of our fathers, who lived at the beginning of the new era of machines. Let us remain in that work which is nearest to us : shoe-production in Zlin.

It is surely enough for us, who remember that the working day of our fathers began with the sunrise and ended close to midnight. The result of such a long working day was one pair of farmer's shoes, half-broken backbone, crooked fingers

and a meagre living on potatoes twice daily. Nobody can say that it was especially advantageous of him to spend all his childhood in the workshop, which was at the same time the kitchen, bedroom and sitting room. Our predecessors welcomed the first stitching machine in those workshops as liberators in the same way as they welcomed the first railway locomotive that drew their hampers of shoes, which till then must have had to be borne on their backs miles to the nearest market.

Do we want such "Golden Times"? Surely none of us wants to live such a life. What makes our life better in the present time? Is it machinery? Yes. But did machinery bring about the whole thing alone? No. But the machine has the major part to its credit for the betterment of our life.

Those of us engaged in teaching may say that they do not use machine at all and still can teach children to read and write in a much shorter time than their grandfathers did. They are right only so far that they know how to teach better than their grandfathers, but they cannot deny that machines do serve them.

The easier means of education and teaching is undoubtedly indebted to machinery. The printing press made the exchange of views possible and helped those best views and ideas to spread. And how are the schoolbooks for children made? By machine.

Would the present success of the teacher be possible if he still had to write on ox skin or parchment? Many are convinced that in the present condition of reading, made by technical progress, a child cannot even be prevented from learning how to read and write because from his very childhood he becomes accustomed to see that people like more to read than even to eat.

From this we see, how machine helps in widening the knowledge of man.

Thus we do not want those old times when our predecessors lived in caves. We do not want even those days which our fathers lived.

Do we want then that machines should be compelled to serve all just in an equal measure, that one should be prohibited the use of machines for producing goods which others cannot provide for themselves ?

This progress we would not have attained if things were left to the hands of those most hesitating because in that case very soon we would find ourselves even before those days of caves.

A look back to the nearest past teaches us that even if the machine does not serve all in an equal measure, it (machine) distributes property, which it creates, among all, even if it cannot make all people equally wealthy.

If the machines serve all, even if not in equal measure, let us try to employ machinery to give out its best to produce most wealth, and let us hope that thus we can reach near the solution of the problem.

## **THE DIFFICULTIES WITH EXPLOIT OF MACHINES**

Machine is the child of tool, without which it could not be born. By a stone-axe can be made only tools, but never a machine.

Firstly we must have at least iron tools as axe and saw and then we may think of making a wooden loom or spinning wheel.

For making a stone-axe man needed a million years and then thousands of years he needed to make one of bronze, iron and at the end a steel one.

By iron axe and iron lance he fought animals in caves and built his home in open places.

At the end he made wooden tools by steel axe and saw and gradually he began to construct a machine—first a wooden one, then metal, and then the first steam engine.

The first bronze or iron axe was as valuable and as big a wealth as a farm or factory is now to man.

The use of tools was more easy, because only individual persons could use them.

The tools were used by man to kill bear, or by tools many people armed themselves for military expeditions.

But that is not the case with machines, especially steam or other new machines.

Machines can be used only collectively, by a group of persons united together for the same interest. This system is absolutely new to the people. They never provided their necessities in that way and thus it is not surprising that quarrels and fights between individuals as well as between nations began.

In old times collective efforts were noticed only in military operations or tribal fights or in the works of slaves.

It is machine which teaches man to work collectively and to produce necessities collectively on the basis of equality.

The steam engine or factory is useless and without value for a single individual. To use it, he must find a number of capable people who can operate the different arrangements.

The success in using those machinery depends on the way of thinking and qualities of people who work behind them, on the surroundings in which they live.

Thus, for instance, in a state where slavery is in vogue it is absolutely impossible to work successfully with the help of machines.

The collective system of work on the basis of equality was also not possible among the old Greeks for their conception about theft.

From this we can see how much religion has improved the way for technical progress by freeing women, stoppage of slavery and increasing common morality.

These impediments were surmounted even before the start of machine age. The question is if the first machine was not the fruit of better morality, better world ?

Could Watt and others invent and make their machines in old Greece ? They could not. The best proof of it lies in the fact that among those millions, who came and went, nobody ever invented anything useful.

Just as it was necessary to improve the human society to enable man to invent those intelligent helpers in the same way it is necessary to improve human society further to enable man to fully utilise those great and rare fruits of human brain.

Man is at present too much burdened by the curse of heavy physical work.' Due to this every mental work is difficult for him and here lies the main reason why human well-being is going on so slowly in utilising technical achievements.

The leading men of undertakings must gain the confidence ; every successful collective work demands mutual confidence of all concerned and the more people there are the more difficult it is to achieve this.

The leading men of undertakings must gain the confidence of all their nearest fellow-workers. To gain this it is not sufficient to have a good heart and good will. The first thing necessary is the ability to produce good and cheap products for the market and thus ensure good wages and continuous employment. The confidence of people cannot be gained by words. It must be gained by values, by service to them.

To produce goods cheaply and well means the realisation of impossibilities : reduce price and increase the quality and value, increase daily wages while reducing piece-rate, increase output and reduce effort. Such production needs the best utilisation of machinery. And to be the basis for increment of well-being more and more perfect machinery are needed.

There are people who assert that the employees have every right to share all the benefits from the use of machinery in the undertaking. This idea, so attractive and convincing

for noble hearts, is, in its basis, absolutely foolish. Just as man is more than machine, so also the undertaking—as a society of working people—is more than a single man. The undertaking, in which the employees would get all the benefits from the use of machines, will look like a man who spends every day all that he gets by his work and who is thus threatened by hunger the very next day when something prevents him from continuing his work.

The industrial undertaking is for the people working in it such source of life, as land is for the peasant. On how much people give back to the undertaking and to machine depends the present and future well-being and prosperity of the public just as the prosperity and future of the peasant and also livelihood of the nation depends on, what the peasant gives to his land, how and at what time. In agriculture, which is an older branch of human work, people already understand this fact. About the relation of undertakers and employees towards undertaking and machine this understanding is only just growing.

## THE PROBLEM OF SUCCESSOR

*During the life-time of Thomas Bata a question was heard many times—if the deal which he created would live and grow even without him and if he had found a successor. In 1931 to the direct query of a certain newspaper, Thomas Bata wrote his reply. At that time the reply created some doubts. But the peaceful development and continuous growth of Bata's enterprise after the death of its creator and founder has vindicated the truth of the words written over his grave: "This man always arranged things in such a way that he might leave any hour settled with everybody."*

The problem of selecting my successor I began to solve 36 years ago when I took in the first helper at my cobbler's table.

I would have never taken a helper or helpers, if I had organised my work in such a way that I would be indispensable.

The work we organize and do, does not need a man who wants to be indispensable. Similarly, the work will not have any use for the man who wants to remain a labourer always. I dismissed a few years ago a labourer who worked in the shoe stock. He used to carry the cases of shoes on his back instead of arranging their transport by the elevator. When I pointed it out to him he replied that it was the Director's job to find out better ways and he just wanted to remain always an honest labourer.

No undertaking can grow up and attain greatness so long as it does not invent a system that may convert the labourers into directors. In those days when we succeeded in solving this problem, we solved also the question of leading our undertaking in the future.



## LAST WILL OF THOMAS BATA

*The great life of a great man who lived and worked with the spirit of service always uppermost in his mind, concludes with the following lines which speak of the high ideals that inspired all his actions.*

The first principle for the prosperity of our works is that you should not consider that the works are only for you or exist only for your sake. Our organization has not been built up with the thought of providing a safe livelihood only for its founders. There have been higher motives which have led us to suppress our own passions and desires when we have seen these to be harmful to the works as a whole.

More than once, we have been prepared to sacrifice our lives for the prosperity of the works and more than one member of our family has already paid this price. That has not been done merely for the sake of acquiring wealth.

In the development of our works we have seen the development of and assured prosperity of the whole district.

It has been our pride and a spur to further untiring labour, to see that through our factory we have brought new life, hitherto unknown, into this part of the world and that with the growth of our factory, the general welfare and education of our people have been increased.

It has been our deep desire to create, to offer to an ever larger number of people a share in the privileges which our concern has brought, both to our employees and to our customers. As long as you continue to serve this great ideal, you will be in accord with the laws of nature and of humanity. As soon, however, as each of you begin to think only of yourself, as soon as you cease to serve the general community through your factory, your hour will have struck and you will inexorably sink to your doom.

## THE BATA'S—300 YEARS AS SHOEMAKERS

*After the death of Thomas Bata, it has been discovered by careful historical research that the Bata's have been making boots and shoes at Zlin continuously for three hundred years or ten generations.*

*The first shoemaking Bat'a, whose name was Lukás, moved to Zlin, when he had reached years of manhood, from Zelechovice (a village about three miles to the east of Zlin), and in 1672 bought the abandoned homestead of the Pivodovskys on the "Turf" (Trávník). The purchase is recorded in the following entry in the Moravian land-register preserved at Brno:*

### THE BATA FAMILY

*appears in the light of historical  
research as follows:*

*Václav Batiu, 1580—1662, Zelechovice  
Lukás Batiu, 1610—1683, Zlin, cobbler  
Lukás Batiu, 1660—1721, Zlin, cobbler  
Martin Batia, 1691—1761, Zlin, cobbler  
Martin Batia, 1715—1777, Zlin, cobbler  
Simon Batia, 1755—1833, Zlin, cobbler  
Antonin Batia, 1802—1850, Zlin, cobbler  
Antonin Bat'a, 1844—1905, Zlin, shoemaker  
Thomas Bat'a, 1876—1932, Zlin, shoemaker  
(manufacturer)*

*Jan A. Bat'a, stepbrother of Thomas, b. 1896,  
Zlin, shoemaker  
Thomas Bat'a jun., b. 1914, shoemaker.*

*"Pivodovsky's old deserted farm has been taken over (1667) by Lukás Batia, a cobbler." Lukas Batiu (as the Bat'as spelt their surname until the eighteenth century) was the son of Václav Batiu of Zelechovice, the first demonstrable ancestor of the Bat'as, who owned a small farmstead and fields here; these the Bat'as then sold to the Motyl family which farms this land to the present day—not even the names of the fields have changed.*

**THE END**

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# HOW I BEGAN

by THOMAS BATA

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